

# Draft Environmental Impact Statement VIRGINIA BEACH TRANSIT EXTENSION STUDY

## Appendix E *Agency Coordination and Correspondence*

February 2015

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3400 Victoria Boulevard, Hampton, Virginia 23661  
Phone: 757-222-6000 ~ Southside Fax: 757-222-6103  
Peninsula Fax: 757-222-6195 ~ [www.hrtransit.org](http://www.hrtransit.org)

August 4, 2009

Kathleen Kilpatrick, Director  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
2801 Kensington Ave.  
Richmond, VA 23221

Subject: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study  
Environmental Impact Statement  
Invitation to Become a Participating Agency

Dear Ms. Kilpatrick,

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), in cooperation with Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, is preparing a **Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS)** to evaluate extending fixed guideway transit service to the City of Virginia Beach as an extension of the Tide Light Rail Project, currently under construction in the City of Norfolk. FTA is requesting that your agency become a participating agency in the environmental review process pursuant to Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). This designation does not imply that your agency supports, has jurisdiction over, or has a special expertise with respect to evaluation of the project, only that it has an interest in some aspect of the proposed project.

Pursuant to SAFETEA-LU, participating agencies are responsible to identify, as early as practicable, any issues of concern regarding the project's potential environmental or socioeconomic impacts that could substantially delay or prevent an agency from granting a permit or other approval that is needed for the project. We suggest that your agency's role in the development of the above project should include the following as they relate to your areas of expertise:

1. Provide meaningful and early input on the purpose and need, range of alternatives to be considered, and the methodologies and level of detail required in alternatives analysis.
2. Participate in coordination meetings and joint field review as appropriate.
3. Timely review and comment on the pre-draft or pre-final environmental documents to reflect the views and concerns of your agency on the adequacy of the document, alternatives considered, and the anticipated impacts and mitigation.

At your discretion, your agency may also become a cooperating agency in the environmental review process under 40 CFR 1501.6 should you desire a higher level of participation.

## **Project Background and Purpose**

In March 2000, HRT prepared a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for an approximately 20-mile Norfolk to Virginia Beach Light Rail System. Following the completion of the FEIS, the City of Virginia Beach decided not to participate in a light rail system at that time. The same year, the City of Norfolk decided to proceed with a federally-funded light rail transit project called The Tide, solely within its city limits.

Recently however, there has been a renewed interest in the expansion of the system into Virginia Beach due to increased highway congestion, rising gas prices, increased environmental awareness, and new urban development patterns in the city's Strategic Growth Areas. In 2008, the Virginia General Assembly passed House Bill 6028, directing HRT to initiate study of expansion of The Tide in Hampton Roads, including the Virginia Beach Oceanfront.

The intent of the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study is to examine the environmental, financial, and social consequences of extending the Tide from its terminus at Newtown Road to the Virginia Beach Oceanfront. In addition to a No-Build (no-action) Alternative, a range of reasonable Build alternatives will be evaluated in the EIS, including an extension of The Tide within the Norfolk Southern railroad right-of-way. Additional alternatives to be considered include the location of stations along the alignment, vehicle technology, the location of a vehicle storage and maintenance facility, and an enhancement of the existing local bus system. Additional alternatives within this framework may be developed during the public and agency scoping process.

## **Options for Comments and Participation**

If you have any questions or would like to discuss in more detail the project or your agencies' respective roles and responsibilities during the preparation of this EIS, please contact *Jayne Whitney, Sr. Vice President for Development* at (757)222-6000 or [jwhitney@hrtransit.org](mailto:jwhitney@hrtransit.org).

**A Resource Agency Meeting** will be held **Wednesday, September 9, 2009, 2:00 p.m.** at **Hampton Roads Transit, 1500 Monticello Ave., Norfolk, VA**. Your agency is invited to attend this meeting. You are invited to participate in this coordination meeting even if you do not elect to become a cooperating agency. If you plan on attending the Resource Agency Meeting, please RSVP by *September 1<sup>st</sup>* to Marie Arnt, Public Involvement Coordinator at (757)222-6000 or [marnt@hrtransit.org](mailto:marnt@hrtransit.org).

In addition to the above listed agency coordination meeting, two **Public Information Meetings** will be held **September 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>** in Virginia Beach at the times and locations indicated below:



September 9, 2009  
Princess Anne High School  
4400 Virginia Beach Blvd.  
Virginia Beach, VA 23462-3198  
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

September 10, 2009  
Va. Beach Convention Center  
1000 19<sup>th</sup> Street  
Virginia Beach, VA 23451-5674  
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Written comments or questions concerning the proposed action and the EIS should be addressed to *Jayne Whitney* and should be received by *September 5, 2009, or within 30 days of receipt of this letter* at the following address:

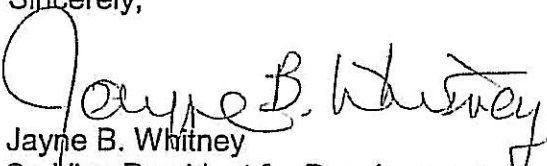
Ms. Jayne B. Whitney  
Sr. Vice President for Development  
Hampton Roads Transit  
3400 Victoria Blvd.  
Hampton, VA 23661

If you wish to become a cooperating agency in the environmental review process, please contact the Federal Transit Administration at the following address:

Ms. Letitia A. Thompson  
Regional Administrator  
Federal Transit Administration  
1760 Market Street, Suite 500  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-4124

Thank you for your participation and interest in this project.

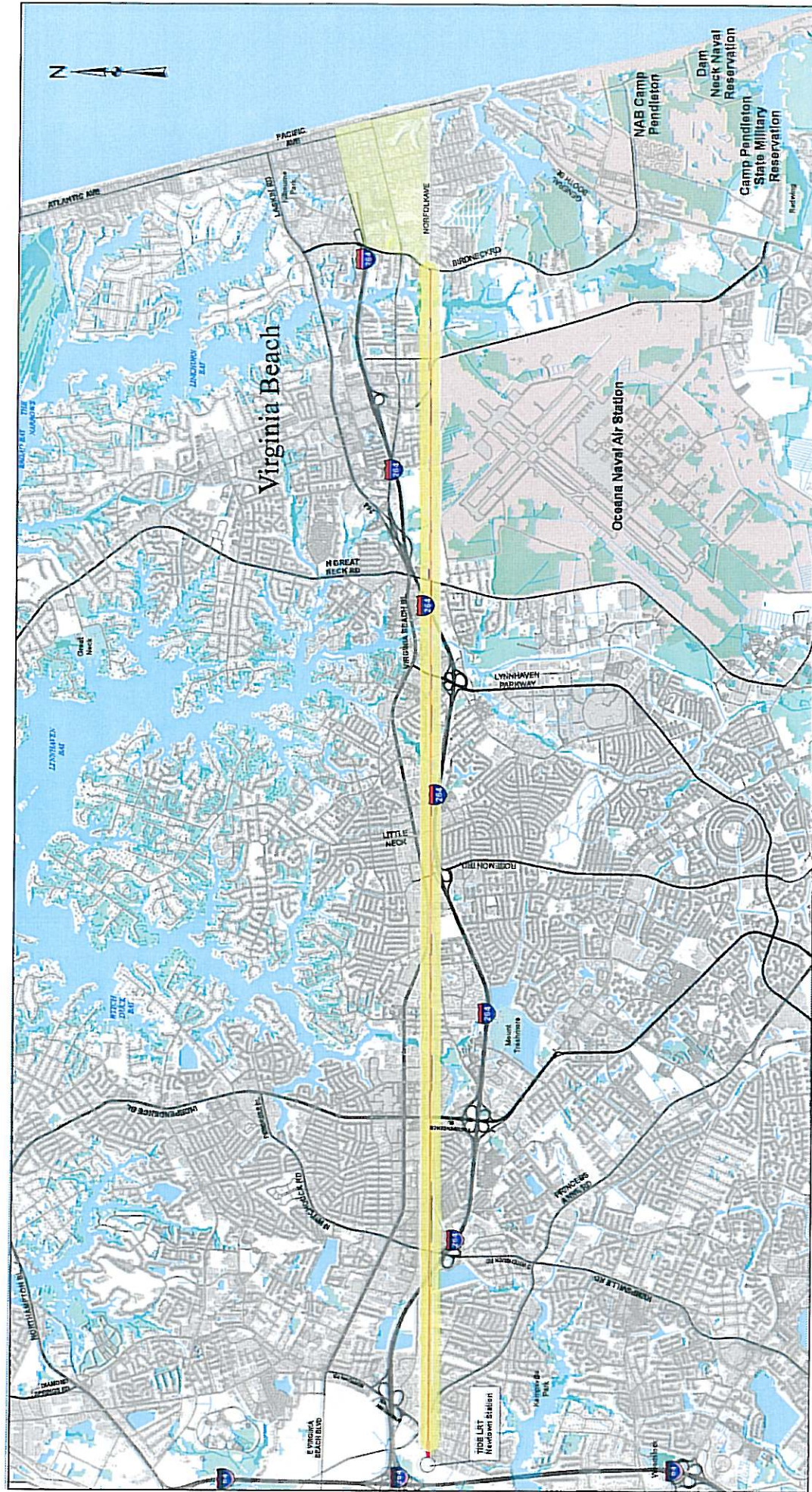
Sincerely,

  
Jayne B. Whitney  
Sr. Vice President for Development

Cc: Ms. Letitia Thompson, FTA Region III  
Mr. Michael S. Townes, HRT  
Document Control: DR009-49947-DE726

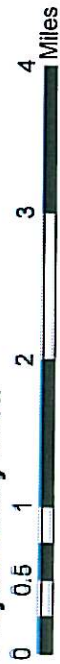
Enclosure (Project area map)





## Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study

Project Study Area





# **Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study**

## **Section 6002 Coordination Plan Mailing List**

### **Federal Agencies**

#### **Advisory Council on Historic Preservation**

Charlene Dwin Vaughn, Assistant Director  
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 803  
Old Post Office Building  
Washington, DC 20004

#### **Council on Environmental Quality**

Horst Greczmiel  
722 Jackson Place, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

#### **U.S. Department of the Interior**

Willie R. Taylor,  
Director, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Main Interior Building (MS 2462)  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

#### **Federal Emergency Management Agency**

Catherine McManus  
Regional Director for Region III  
One Independence Mall, Sixth Floor  
615 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

#### **Federal Highway Administration**

Roberto Fonseca-Martinez, Division Administrator  
400 North 8th Street, Room 750  
Richmond, VA 23219

#### **Federal Railroad Administration**

Regional Administrator  
2 International Plaza, Suite 550  
Philadelphia, PA 19113

#### **Federal Aviation Administration**

Marie Kennington-Gardiner  
Eastern Regional Administrator  
159-30 Rockaway Boulevard  
Jamaica, NY 11434-4809

**National Marine Fisheries Service**

Dr. James W. Balsiger  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
1315 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

**Oceana Naval Air Station**

Captain M. R. Hunter, Commanding Officer  
1750 Tomcat Blvd.  
Virginia Beach VA 23460

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers –Norfolk District**

Bob Hume, Chief of Regulatory Office  
803 Front Street  
Norfolk, VA 23510

**U.S. Coast Guard****5<sup>th</sup> District**

Rear Admiral Wayne Justice, Commander  
431 Crawford Street  
Portsmouth, VA 23704-5004

**U.S. Department of Agriculture**

J. Vern Orrell, Acting State Director  
Virginia State Office  
1606 Santa Rosa Road  
Richmond, VA 23229-5014

**U.S. Department of Commerce – NOAA**

Admiral Philip Kenul, Director  
Atlantic Marine Operations Center  
439 West York Street  
Norfolk, VA 23510

**U.S. Department of Health & Human Services**

Dalton Paxman, Acting Regional Director  
Public Ledger Building, Suite 436  
150 S. Independence Mall West  
Philadelphia, PA 19106-3499

**U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development**

Charles Famuliner, Acting Field Office Director  
Richmond Field Office  
600 East Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219-4920



**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region III**

William C. Early, Acting Regional Administrator  
1650 Arch Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**

Cindy Schulz  
Virginia Ecological Field Office  
6669 Short Lane  
Gloucester, VA 23061-4410

**Naval Facilities Engineering Command**

Commander, Atlantic Division  
1510 Gilbert Street  
Norfolk, VA 23511

**State Agencies****Virginia Department of Environmental Quality**

David K. Paylor  
Office of Environmental Impact Review  
P.O. Box 1105, Richmond, Virginia 23218

**Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries**

Robert W. Duncan, Director  
4010 W. Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23230

**Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services**

Todd P. Haymore  
102 Governor Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

**Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation**

Joseph Maroon, Director  
203 Governor Street, Suite 213  
Richmond, VA 23219

**Virginia Department of Historic Resources**

Kathleen Kilpatrick, Director  
2801 Kensington Ave.  
Richmond, VA 23221

**Virginia Marine Resources Commission**

Steven G. Bowman, Commissioner  
2600 Washington Avenue, Suite 107  
Newport News, VA 23607

**Virginia Institute of Marine Science**

Gary F. Anderson, Assistant Director, ITNS  
P.O. Box 1346  
Gloucester, VA 23062

**Virginia Department of Health**

Karen Remley, M.D., MBA  
1500 East Main Street  
2nd Floor, Room 214  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

**Virginia Division of Mines, Minerals, and Energy**

Stephen A. Walz, Director  
Washington Building, 8th Floor  
1100 Bank Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

**Virginia Department of Transportation**

David S. Ekern P.E., Commissioner  
1401 East Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

**Virginia Department of Forestry**

Robert S. Bloxom, Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry  
Fontaine Research Park  
900 Natural Resources Drive, Suite 800  
Charlottesville, VA 22903

**Virginia Department of Economic Development**

James E. Ukrop, Chairman  
901 East Byrd Street  
P.O. Box 798  
Richmond, VA 23218-0798

**Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation**

Charles M. Badger, Director  
P. O. Box 590  
Richmond, VA 23218-0590

**Regional Authorities****Hampton Roads Planning District Commission**

Bruce C. Goodson, Chair  
The Regional Building  
723 Woodlake Drive  
Chesapeake, Virginia 23320



**Norfolk Airport Authority**

Wayne E. Shank, Executive Director  
2200 Norview Avenue  
Norfolk, VA 23518-5807

**Virginia Port Authority**

Jerry Bridges, Executive Director  
600 World Trade Center  
Norfolk, VA 23510

**Local Government Agencies / Municipalities****City of Virginia Beach**

James K. Spore, City Manager  
Office of the City Manager  
Municipal Center, Bldg 1  
2401 Courthouse Drive, Suite 234  
Virginia Beach, VA 23456

**City of Norfolk**

Regina V.K. Williams, City Manager  
Office of the City Manager  
810 Union St # 1101  
Norfolk, VA 23510-8033

File Code No: EX514	Department: Development
Project No: DR002	Contract No:
Record Series No: GS19 100891	Years of Retention: PERM
Destroy Date: 07 / 30 /2010	File Type <input type="checkbox"/> CD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic File
Action To/Due:	Cc: Mailing list.
Storage: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-site <input type="checkbox"/> Off-Site	Submitted by: Gina Lymber

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AUG 04 2009

DEPARTMENTS  
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☐ PLAN    ☐ IT  
☐ MGMT SVCS    ☐ OTHER



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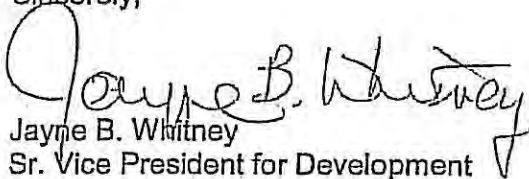
Ms. Jayne B. Whitney  
Sr. Vice President for Development  
Hampton Roads Transit  
3400 Victoria Blvd.  
Hampton, VA 23661

If you wish to become a cooperating agency in the environmental review process, please contact the Federal Transit Administration at the following address:

Ms. Letitia A. Thompson  
Regional Administrator  
Federal Transit Administration  
1760 Market Street, Suite 500  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-4124

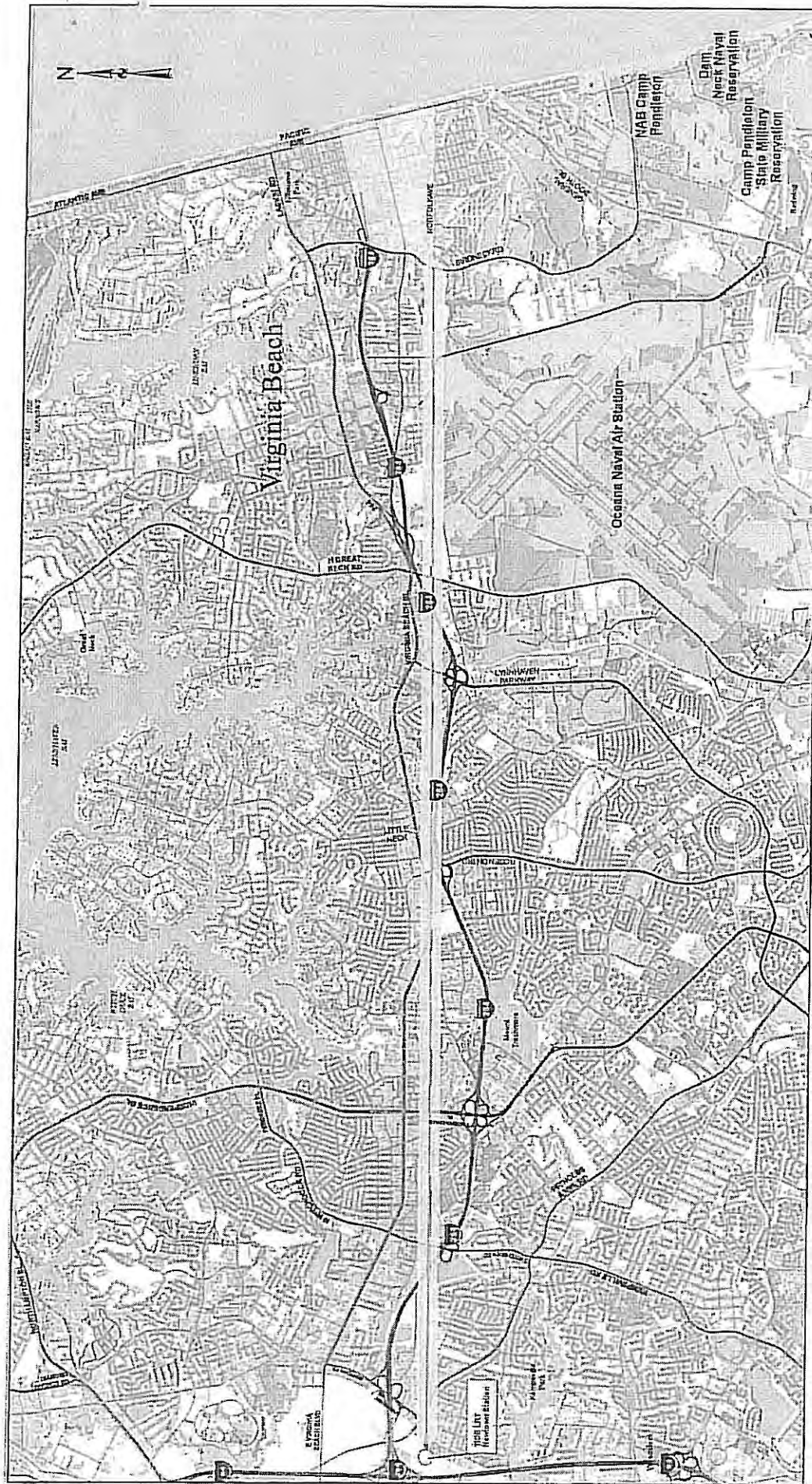
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Sincerely,

  
Jayne B. Whitney  
Sr. Vice President for Development

Cc: Ms. Letitia Thompson, FTA Region III  
Mr. Michael S. Townes, HRT  
Document Control: DR009-49947-DE726

Enclosure (Project area map)



# Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study Project Study Area



July 2, 2009: Stakeholder Interviews



## **Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study Section 6002 Coordination Plan Mailing List**

### **Federal Agencies**

**Advisory Council on Historic Preservation**  
Charlene Dwin Vaughn, Assistant Director  
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 803  
Old Post Office Building  
Washington, DC 20004

**Council on Environmental Quality**  
Horst Greczmiel  
722 Jackson Place, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

**U.S. Department of the Interior**  
Willie R. Taylor,  
Director, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Main Interior Building (MS 2462)  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

**Federal Emergency Management Agency**  
Catherine McManus  
Regional Director for Region III  
One Independence Mall, Sixth Floor  
615 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

**Federal Highway Administration**  
Roberto Fonseca-Martinez, Division Administrator  
400 North 8th Street, Room 750  
Richmond, VA 23219

**Federal Railroad Administration**  
Regional Administrator  
2 International Plaza, Suite 550  
Philadelphia, PA 19113

**Federal Aviation Administration**  
Marie Kennington-Gardiner  
Eastern Regional Administrator  
159-30 Rockaway Boulevard  
Jamaica, NY 11434-4809

**National Marine Fisheries Service**

Dr. James W. Balsiger  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
1315 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

**Oceana Naval Air Station**

Captain M. R. Hunter, Commanding Officer  
1750 Tomcat Blvd.  
Virginia Beach VA 23460

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers –Norfolk District**

Bob Hume, Chief of Regulatory Office  
803 Front Street  
Norfolk, VA 23510

**U.S. Coast Guard**

**5<sup>th</sup> District**

Rear Admiral Wayne Justice, Commander  
431 Crawford Street  
Portsmouth, VA 23704-5004

**U.S. Department of Agriculture**

J. Vern Orrell, Acting State Director  
Virginia State Office  
1606 Santa Rosa Road  
Richmond, VA 23229-5014

**U.S. Department of Commerce – NOAA**

Admiral Philip Kenul, Director  
Atlantic Marine Operations Center  
439 West York Street  
Norfolk, VA 23510

**U.S. Department of Health & Human Services**

Dalton Paxman, Acting Regional Director  
Public Ledger Building, Suite 436  
150 S. Independence Mall West  
Philadelphia, PA 19106-3499

**U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development**

Charles Famuliner, Acting Field Office Director  
Richmond Field Office  
600 East Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219-4920

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region III**

William C. Early, Acting Regional Administrator  
1650 Arch Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**

Cindy Schulz  
Virginia Ecological Field Office  
6669 Short Lane  
Gloucester, VA 23061-4410

**Naval Facilities Engineering Command**

Commander, Atlantic Division  
1510 Gilbert Street  
Norfolk, VA 23511

**State Agencies**

**Virginia Department of Environmental Quality**

David K. Paylor  
Office of Environmental Impact Review  
P.O. Box 1105, Richmond, Virginia 23218

**Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries**

Robert W. Duncan, Director  
4010 W. Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23230

**Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services**

Todd P. Haymore  
102 Governor Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

**Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation**

Joseph Maroon, Director  
203 Governor Street, Suite 213  
Richmond, VA 23219

**Virginia Department of Historic Resources**

Kathleen Kilpatrick, Director  
2801 Kensington Ave.  
Richmond, VA 23221

**Virginia Marine Resources Commission**

Steven G. Bowman, Commissioner  
2600 Washington Avenue, Suite 107  
Newport News, VA 23607



**Virginia Institute of Marine Science**  
Gary F. Anderson, Assistant Director, ITNS  
P.O. Box 1346  
Gloucester, VA 23062

**Virginia Department of Health**  
Karen Remley, M.D., MBA  
1500 East Main Street  
2nd Floor, Room 214  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

**Virginia Division of Mines, Minerals, and Energy**  
Stephen A. Walz, Director  
Washington Building, 8th Floor  
1100 Bank Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

**Virginia Department of Transportation**  
David S. Ekern P.E., Commissioner  
1401 East Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

**Virginia Department of Forestry**  
Robert S. Bloxom, Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry  
Fontaine Research Park  
900 Natural Resources Drive, Suite 800  
Charlottesville, VA 22903

**Virginia Department of Economic Development**  
James E. Ukrop, Chairman  
901 East Byrd Street  
P.O. Box 798  
Richmond, VA 23218-0798

**Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation**  
Charles M. Badger, Director  
P. O. Box 590  
Richmond, VA 23218-0590

**Regional Authorities**

**Hampton Roads Planning District Commission**  
Bruce C. Goodson, Chair  
The Regional Building  
723 Woodlake Drive  
Chesapeake, Virginia 23320

**Norfolk Airport Authority**

Wayne E. Shank, Executive Director  
2200 Norview Avenue  
Norfolk, VA 23518-5807

**Virginia Port Authority**

Jerry Bridges, Executive Director  
600 World Trade Center  
Norfolk, VA 23510

**Local Government Agencies / Municipalities**

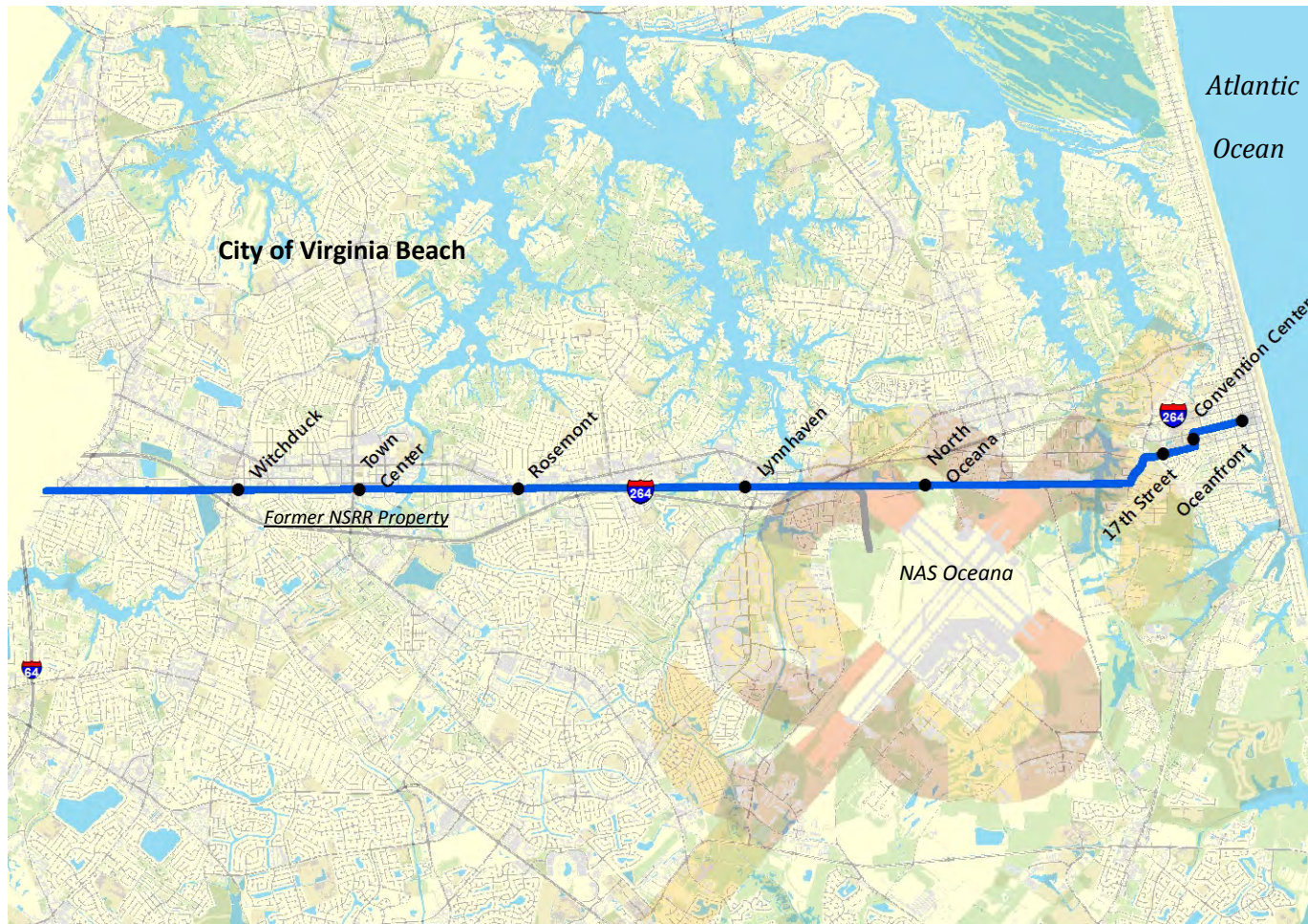
**City of Virginia Beach**

James K. Spore, City Manager  
Office of the City Manager  
Municipal Center, Bldg 1  
2401 Courthouse Drive, Suite 234  
Virginia Beach, VA 23456

**City of Norfolk**

Regina V.K. Williams, City Manager  
Office of the City Manager  
810 Union St # 1101  
Norfolk, VA 23510-8033

## Virginia Beach Transit Extension Using Former NSRR Property

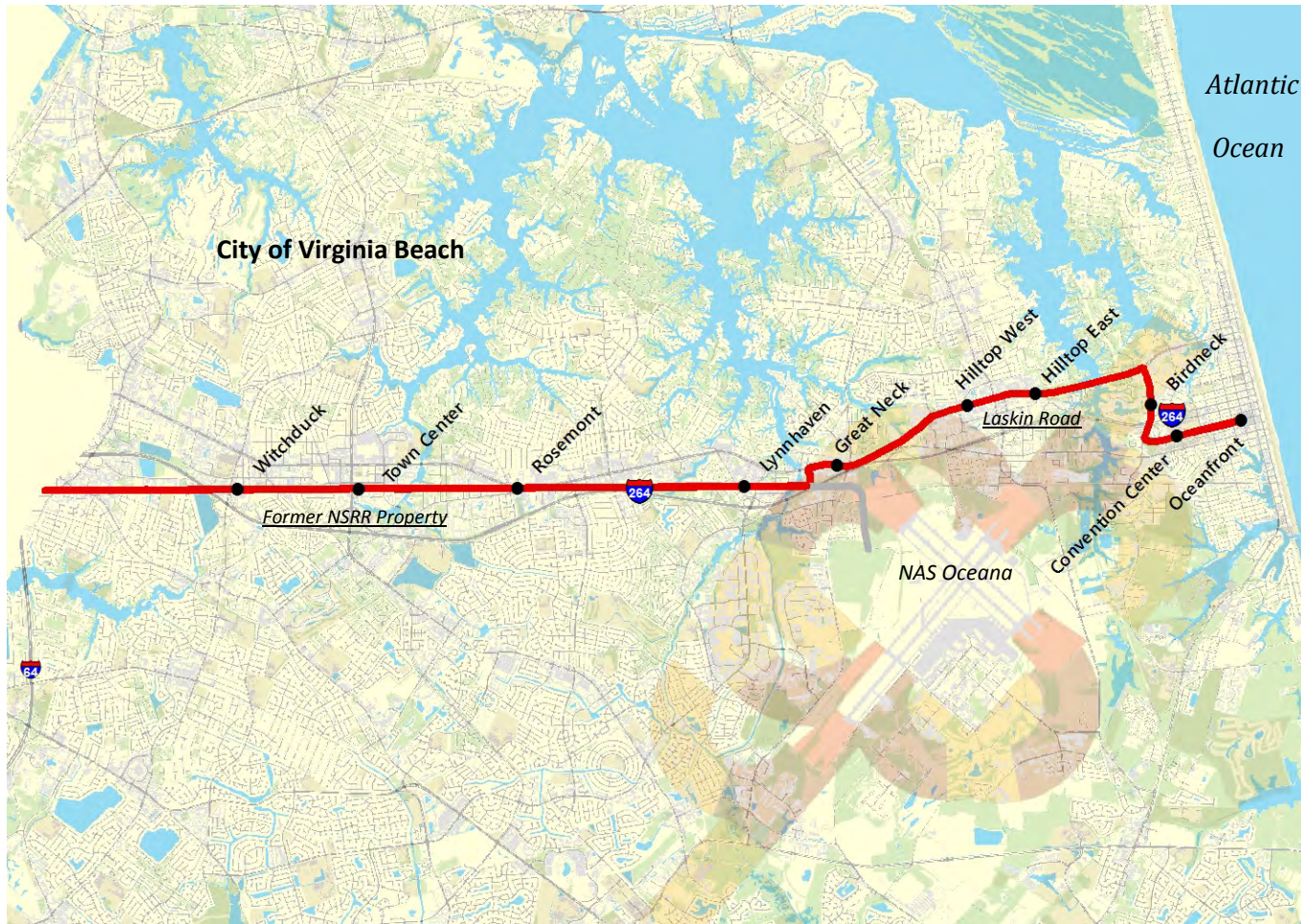


**VIRGINIA BEACH TRANSIT  
EXTENSION STUDY**





## Virginia Beach Transit Extension Hilltop (Laskin Road) Alternative Alignment



**VIRGINIA BEACH TRANSIT  
EXTENSION STUDY**



**Jayne Whitney**

---

**From:** Jayne Whitney  
**Sent:** Friday, August 14, 2009 9:58 AM  
**To:** Ray Amoruso; Karen Waterman; 'Eric Nelson'  
**Subject:** FW: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study

Pls see response from FHWA

---

**From:** Marisel.lopez-cruz@dot.gov [mailto:Marisel.lopez-cruz@dot.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2009 11:42 AM  
**To:** Jayne Whitney  
**Subject:** Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study

Dear Ms. Jayne B. Whitney,

Thanks for your letter of August 4, 2009, requesting our involvement as participating agency for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study. The FHWA is hereby notifying that we are interested in being participating agency in this evaluation and would like to obtain information about how our agency could provide support in this Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Please let us know.

Regards,

***Marisel López Cruz***

Environmental Protection Specialist  
Federal Highway Administration  
Virginia Division  
400 North 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 750  
Richmond, Virginia 23219  
Phone: (804) 775-3338  
Fax: (804) 804-775-3356

8/25/2009

File Code No: ED001	Department: Dev.
Project No: DR009	Contract No: AA/DEIS.
Series No: 651910037	Years of Retention: 3yrs
Destroy Date: Aug. 19/2012	File Type: <input type="checkbox"/> CD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic
Action To/Due: Dest.	Cc: J.W. Kw.
Storage: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Site <input type="checkbox"/> Off-Site	Submitted by: <i>[Signature]</i> Ly.



RECEIVED

AUG 19 2009



Todd P. Haymore  
Commissioner

# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

PO Box 1163, Richmond, Virginia 23218

Phone: 804/786-3501 • Fax: 804/371-2945 • Hearing Impaired: 800/828-1120

[www.vdacs.virginia.gov](http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov)

DEPARTMENTS  
( ) EXEC ( ) DEV ( ) FIN  
( ) PLAN ( ) IT ( )  
( ) MGMT SVCS ( ) OT



August 14, 2009

Ms. Jayne B. Whitney  
Sr. Vice President for Development  
Hampton Roads Transit  
3400 Victoria Blvd.  
Hampton, VA 23661

Dear Ms. Whitney:

I have received your letter of August 4, 2009, regarding the environmental review for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study.

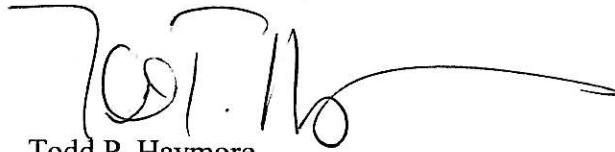
Our agency works closely with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) in determining potential impact of proposed projects on state endangered and threatened plant and insect species. Through a Memorandum of Agreement between our agencies, DCR reviews these projects and responds on our behalf on projects that do not adversely affect any documented state-listed endangered or threatened plant or insect species. If after researching its database of natural resources, critical habitats and species locations, DCR finds that a project poses a potential adverse impact on an endangered or threatened plant or insect species, the appropriate information will be referred to this agency for further review and possible mitigation.

If you have not already done so, I respectfully suggest that you include Ms. Rene Hypes, the Environmental Review Coordinator with DCR's Division of Natural Heritage, in your correspondence regarding this project. She can be reached at [rene.hypes@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:rene.hypes@dcr.virginia.gov) or (804) 371-2708. Her mailing information is indicated below.

Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Division of Natural Heritage Project Review  
217 Governor Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

Please be advised, too, that Mr. Keith Tignor, Endangered Species Coordinator in our Office of Plant and Pest Services, will attend the meetings indicated in your correspondence. Should you need to contact him, Mr. Tignor can be reached at [Keith.Tignor@vdacs.virginia.gov](mailto:Keith.Tignor@vdacs.virginia.gov) or (804) 786-3515.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Haymore', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Todd P. Haymore  
Commissioner

cc: Donald G. Blankenship, Deputy Commissioner  
Andres Alvarez, Director of Division of Consumer Protection  
Larry Nichols, Program Manager, Office of Plant and Pest Services  
Keith Tignor, Endangered Species Coordinator, Office of Plant and Pest Services  
Letitia A. Thompson, Regional Administrator, Federal Transit Administration  
Marie Arnt, Public Involvement Coordinator, Federal Transit Administration  
Rene Hypes, DCR, Natural Heritage Project Review Manager



VIRGINIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP  
P.O. Box 798 . 901 East Byrd Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23218-0798  
804.545.5600 . www.YesVirginia.org

RECEIVED

AUG 17 2009

DEPAR  
( ) EXEC  
( ) PLAN  
( ) MGMT SVCS

August 12, 2009

Ms. Jayne B. Whitney  
Sr. Vice President for Development  
Hampton Roads Transit  
3400 Victoria Boulevard  
Hampton, Virginia 23661

Dear Ms. Whitney:

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) does not have any comments regarding the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study. As the Commonwealth's economic development marketing organization, the VEDP does not have expertise in the environmental impacts of construction projects.

Other state organizations that we partner with for information that you are soliciting for comment include the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, the Virginia Department of Natural Resources, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. If you have not contacted these agencies, you may want to do so in the future.

Sincerely,

John K. Loftus  
Sites and Buildings Manager

File Code No: EX420	Department: DEVEL
Project No: DR009	Contract No: 49447
Series No: 65191004A	Years of Retention: PERM
Destroy Date:	File Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic
Action To/Due:	Cc: RA, EN, RL, KW
Storage: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Site <input type="checkbox"/> Off-Site	Submitted by: Jina Lymb.

File Code No: EX410	Department: Develop.
Project No: DV003	Contract No: AA/DEIS
Series No: 65190037	Years of Retention: 3 YRS.
Destroy Date: Aug 27/12	File Type: <input type="checkbox"/> CD <input type="checkbox"/> Paper <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Electronic
Action To/Due: Dest.	Cc: <i>[Signature]</i> KW, RL, RA H.A, E, N, O, G
Storage: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Site <input type="checkbox"/> Off-Site	Submitted by: <i>[Signature]</i> Lyn.





# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
1401 EAST BROAD STREET  
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23219-2000

David S. Ekern, P.E.  
COMMISSIONER

August 26, 2009

Ms. Jayne B. Whitney  
Senior Vice President for Development  
Hampton Roads Transit  
3400 Victoria Boulevard  
Hampton, Virginia 23661

RECEIVED

AUG 27 2009

DEPAR.  
☐ EXEC ☒ DEV  
☐ PLAN ☐ IT ☐ OPS  
☐ MGMT SVCS ☐ OTHER

Subject: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study  
Environmental Impact Statement  
Invitation to Become a Participating Agency

Dear Ms. Whitney:

Commissioner David S. Ekern has asked me to respond to your letter of August 4, 2009, inviting the Virginia Department of Transportation to become a participating agency in cooperation with Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRT) in preparing a supplemental draft environmental impact statement to evaluate extending fixed guide rail transit service to the City of Virginia Beach as an extension of the Tide Light Rail Project, currently under construction in the City of Norfolk.

Please be advised that VDOT accepts your invitation to become a participating agency for this study and I've asked Dennis Heuer, the Department of Transportation's District Administrator in the Hampton Roads area to be the point of contact for Hampton Roads Transit for this study. Mr. Heuer's staff will take the lead on behalf of the Department of Transportation. We look forward to the meetings on September 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> and look forward to working with HRT, VDRT, and the Federal Transit Administration on this study.

Sincerely,

Richard L. Walton, Jr.  
Chief of Policy and Environment

Cc: Mr. Dennis W. Heuer, P.E.  
Mr. Steve Long  
Ms. Letitia A. Thompson  
Mr. Michael S. Townes  
Ms. Marie Arnt

File Code No: <u>EX450</u>	Department: <u>Dev</u>
Project No: <u>DV003</u>	Contract No: <u>AA/DEIS-</u>
Series No: <u>65190037</u>	Years of Retention: <u>3yrs</u>
Destroy Date: <u>Aug 27/12</u>	File Type: <input type="checkbox"/> CD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic
Action To/Due: <u>Destroy</u>	Cc: <u>J.W.K.W. RL, RA</u> <u>M.A.</u>
Storage: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Site <input type="checkbox"/> Off-Site	Submitted by: <u>J. 102 D.L.</u>

E.N O.G.



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

L. Preston Bryant, Jr.  
Secretary of Natural Resources

**Department of Historic Resources**  
2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221-0311

Kathleen S. Kilpatrick  
Director

Tel: (804) 367-2323  
Fax: (804) 367-2391  
TDD: (804) 367-2386  
[www.dhr.virginia.gov](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov)

26 August 2009

**RECEIVED**

Ms Lotitia A. Thompson  
Regional Administrator  
Federal Transit Administration  
1760 Market Street, Suite 500  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-4124

AUG 27 2009

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES  
( ) EXEC ( ) PLAN ( ) MGMT SVCS ( ) OTHER ( ) OPS

RE: Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for extension of the Tide Light Rail Project  
City of Norfolk to the City of Virginia Beach  
VDHR File No. 2009-1200

Dear Ms Thompson:

The Department of Historic Resources (DHR) has received from Hampton Rails Transit (HRT) a request for comment on the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for the extension of the Tide Light Rail Project from the City of Norfolk to the City of Virginia Beach. The proposed undertaking involves construction of an approximately 20-mile extension of the existing Light Rail System from the Norfolk to Virginia Beach. The intent of the current solicitation for comments from the DHR is to identify potential environmental issues and concerns early in the planning process.

The proposed undertaking does have the potential to affect properties, to include those significant for their historic, architectural, and/or archaeological importance, listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. We request that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) continue to consult with the DHR pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, and its implementing regulation 36 CFR Part 800. The regulations that govern Section 106 require a federal agency to take into account the effects of its undertaking on properties listed in or eligible for the National Register and to afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) and opportunity to comment. The steps of the Section 106 process involve the federal agency to identify consulting parties, define the Area of Potential Effects (APE), identify historic properties within the APE, assess the effect of its undertaking on those properties in the APE, and, if necessary, to mitigate any adverse effects to historic properties. All of this is done in consultation with the State Historic

Administrative Services  
10 Courthouse Avenue  
Petersburg, VA 23803  
Tel: (804) 862-6416  
Fax: (804) 862-6196

Capital Region Office  
2801 Kensington Ave.  
Richmond, VA 23221  
Tel: (804) 367-2323  
Fax: (804) 367-2391

Tidewater Region Office  
14415 Old Courthouse Way, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Newport News, VA 23608  
Tel: (757) 886-2807  
Fax: (757) 886-2808

Roanoke Region Office  
1030 Penmar Ave., SE  
Roanoke, VA 24013  
Tel: (540) 857-7585  
Fax: (540) 857-7588

Northern Region Office  
5357 Main Street  
PO Box 519  
Stephens City, VA 22655  
Tel: (540) 868-7029  
Fax: (540) 868-7033

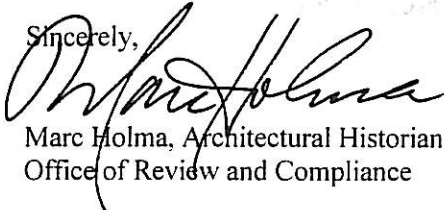
Page 2  
26 August 2009  
Ms Lotitia A. Thompson

Preservation Officer, which in Virginia is the DHR. For further guidance on what the DHR needs in order to review undertakings subject to Section 106 please reference our website at [http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/review/section\\_106.htm](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/review/section_106.htm). For general information on Section 106 and what is required of a federal agency to fulfill its obligations under this mandate please reference the ACHP website at [www.achp.gov](http://www.achp.gov).

We look forward to working with the FTA and its consultant on this project.

If you have any questions about our comments, please contact me at (804) 367-2323, Ext. 114.

Sincerely,



Marc Holma, Architectural Historian  
Office of Review and Compliance

C: Ms. Jayne B. Whitney, Hampton Roads Transit



File Code No: EX570	Department: Dev.
Project No: DV003	Contract No:
Series No: 651910037	Years of Retention: PERM
Destroy Date: /	File Type: <input type="checkbox"/> CD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic
Action To/Due: /	Cc: E.A.J. W. N.R. K.W. L.A. H.A. E.N. R.L.
Storage: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Site <input type="checkbox"/> Off-Site	Submitted by: J. P. L.



# United States Department of the Interior

U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Reston, VA 20192

RECEIVED

SEP 11 2009

EXEC DEPARTMENTS  
( ) PLAN ( ) DEV  
( ) MGMT ( ) IT  
( ) SCGS ( ) OTHER ( ) FW ( ) OPS

In Reply Refer To:  
Mail Stop 423  
ER 09/852

SEP 04 2009

Ms. Jayne B. Whitney  
Sr. Vice President for Development  
Hampton Roads Transit  
3400 Victoria Blvd.  
Hampton, Virginia 23661

Subject: Invitation to Become a Participating Agency for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension  
Study Environmental Impact Statement, VA

Dear Ms. Whitney:

This is in response to your letter dated August 4, 2009 to the Director of the Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance requesting that the U.S. Department of the Interior serve as a participating agency on the subject environmental impact statement.

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) declines the request to be an official participating agency for this NEPA activity. The basis of this decision is that the USGS has no official jurisdiction or authority with respect to the project or the natural resources that may be affected by the proposed action. However, the USGS is a source of scientific data and expertise concerning the natural resources of the project area.

If you have any questions concerning our decision, you can contact me at (703) 648-4423. For information concerning the natural resources of the project area, contact Mark Bennett, Director of the USGS Virginia Water Science Center, at (804) 261-2643.

Sincerely,

James F. Devine  
Senior Advisor for Science Applications

Copies to:  
DOI Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance  
USGS Virginia Water Science Center



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Transit  
Administration**

REGION III  
Delaware, District of  
Columbia, Maryland,  
Pennsylvania, Virginia,  
West Virginia

1760 Market Street  
Suite 500  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-4124  
215-656-7100  
215-656-7260 (fax)

Mr. Michael Townes  
Executive Director  
Transportation District Commission of Hampton Roads  
3400 Victoria Boulevard  
Hampton, Virginia 23661

SEP 22 2009

Re: Virginia Beach Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (AA/DEIS)

Dear Mr. Townes:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has completed its review of Hampton Road Transit's (HRT) recommendation of proceeding with a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Virginia Beach extension project. This Supplemental DEIS will be based on the original Final EIS prepared in March 2000 for the Norfolk-Virginia Beach Light Rail Transit (LRT) project.

With changes to the Norfolk Southern corridor since 2000, the Supplemental DEIS will address new site-specific impacts, update ridership forecasts and refine capital and operating estimates.

FTA concurs with HRT's recommendation for proceeding with a Supplemental DEIS for the Virginia Beach extension project.

Tony Cho of my staff is available to answer questions or provide further assistance.

Sincerely,

Letitia A. Thompson  
Regional Administrator



# City of Virginia Beach

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
(757) 385-4242  
FAX (757) 427-5626

VBgov.com  
MUNICIPAL CENTER  
BUILDING 1, ROOM 234  
2401 COURTHOUSE DRIVE  
VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA 23456-9001

June 7, 2010

Rear Admiral Mark S. Boensel  
Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic  
1510 Gilbert Street  
Norfolk, VA 23511

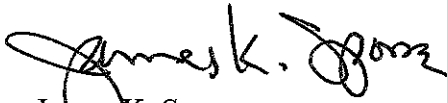
Subject: Transit Extension Study

Dear Rear Admiral Boensel:

I am writing to request an opportunity for representatives of the City of Virginia Beach and Hampton Roads Transit to brief you on the project schedule and status of the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study. This study, and its companion second phase, is looking at improved public transportation options extending from the eastern city limits of Norfolk to the Virginia Beach oceanfront and from EVMS/downtown Norfolk to the Navy base.

We are aware of your interest and commitment to improvements in our region's transportation network and would hope to be able to brief you prior to the next series of public meetings scheduled for June 30, 2010. Please let me know what dates are available on your schedule.

Best Regards,



James K. Spore  
City Manager

dsc

cc William D. Sessoms, Jr., Mayor  
Philip Shucet





U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Transit  
Administration**

REGION III  
Delaware, District of  
Columbia, Maryland,  
Pennsylvania, Virginia,  
West Virginia

1760 Market Street  
Suite 500  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-4124  
215-656-7100  
215-656-7260 (fax)

**AUG 17 2010**

Mr. Philip A. Shucet  
President and CEO  
Hampton Roads Transit  
3400 Victoria Boulevard  
Hampton, Virginia 23661

Dear Mr. Shucet:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has completed its review of your request for a Letter of No Prejudice (LONP) to incur costs for a portion of the Norfolk Southern (NS) Right of Way (ROW) acquisition in the amount of \$5 million (Federal share). This LONP approval only includes permission to use formula funds for Hampton Road Transit's (HRT) portion of the ROW purchase. Your letter also requested guidance on how to take the necessary steps to ensure that the City of Virginia Beach contribution towards the purchase of the NS ROW can be applied to the required local share of a future transit project developed in the corridor.

It is understood that HRT, in cooperation with the City of Virginia Beach, VA (City) is interested in accomplishing the early acquisition of a railroad corridor for a future transit project. This would be an extension of the existing Norfolk LRT project that is currently under construction in Norfolk, VA.

Certain actions have already been undertaken relative to the acquisition of approximately 10.57 miles of NS ROW for this project. The City/HRT is committed to settle on the acquisition of the NS railroad corridor by September 1, 2010, for an agreed to price of \$40 million.

FTA has examined the preliminary review report provided by HRT's review appraiser, along with several of the appraisal materials that have been provided by HRT over the past several months. Some of the materials requested by FTA are still pending (including further FTA review of those materials), and it is uncertain if all activities requested by FTA will be accomplished by the September 1, 2010 scheduled closing date.

However, based on the FTA review of materials submitted thus far, it is reasonable to conclude that there is sufficient inherent property value in this transaction, to support a future FTA grant of \$5 million, if a related project is approved.

This approval allows HRT to incur costs for the project described above, and retains the project's eligibility for future FTA grant assistance. As with all pre-award authority, all Federal requirements must be met prior to incurring costs in order to retain eligibility of the costs for future FTA grant assistance. This authority to incur costs provided in this letter does not constitute an FTA commitment that future Federal dollars will be approved for this project.

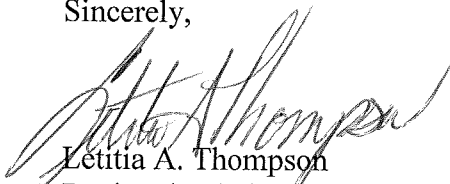
HRT will continue to work with FTA staff to complete the appraisal review and approval of the NS ROW purchase.

This Letter of No Prejudice expires on August 12, 2015.

As for the requested guidance relating to using the City's portion of the purchase of the NS ROW towards the local match of a future transit project, the "common grant rule" at 49 CFR 18.24(f) covers ROW contributions to FTA-assisted projects and is referenced in all of our grant-program circulars. FTA concurs that the City's portion of local funds expended related to this transaction could potentially be used as an "in kind contribution" for a credit toward the local matching share for the cost of a future project approved by the FTA. The appraised value, (less the \$5 million Federal contribution through HRT) at the time of entry into Final Design of the FTA-assisted project would determine the value of the property to be used towards the local match contribution to the future project.

Please contact Tony Cho of my staff with any questions you have about proceeding under the authority to incur costs provided in this letter. Mr. Cho can be reached at 215-656-7250, or via email at [tony.cho@dot.gov](mailto:tony.cho@dot.gov).

Sincerely,



Letitia A. Thompson  
Regional Administrator



# City of Virginia Beach

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
(757) 385-4242  
FAX (757) 427-5626

VBgov.com  
MUNICIPAL CENTER  
BUILDING 1, ROOM 234  
2401 COURTHOUSE DRIVE  
VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA 23456-9001

August 17, 2010

Ms. Jayne Whitney  
Hampton Roads Transit  
Senior Vice President for Development  
1500 Monticello Av  
Norfolk, VA 23510

**Subject: Response to questions posted in July 9, 2010 letter**

Dear Ms. Whitney:

Thank you for giving the City of Virginia Beach the opportunity to address the outstanding issues. We've contacted the appropriate City departments to answer your questions.

**1. Station Area Planning**

The nine station locations identified in Attachment 1 of your letter are consistent with our City plans, in relation to an opening day scenario for a BRT/LRT extension into Virginia Beach. We would like to note that the Pembroke SGA calls for two additional stops in the area as our urban core becomes more fully developed. Also, the Newtown SGA calls for either an additional or relocated station approximately 1/3 mile east of the current Newtown station and Park and Ride. Please pay particular attention to the historically significant structure at 101 South Lynnhaven Road and other historically significant sites or districts.

**2. East of Birdneck Alternative Alignments**

The three alternatives shown in Attachment 2 are acceptable for further analysis. As we have already noted, Alternative A-6 may not be consistent with the Resort Area Master Plan's roadway plan, as 17<sup>th</sup> Street is designated as the primary vehicle corridor for the area. However, if this alternative is by far the top alternative, we can evaluate other alternatives for the area's vehicular traffic flow.

We are also interested in the effects of a double vs. single track along the eastern portion of the 19<sup>th</sup> Street alignment (applicable to all three alternatives). The Resort Area Master Plan calls for a single track in this area, as depicted in the plan's graphics. Double

Ms. Jayne Whitney  
Subject: Response to July 9, 2010 Letter  
August 17, 2010  
Page 2

tracking will need to accommodate the pedestrian oriented nature of the corridor in order to be compatible with this area's vision plan.

**3. Vehicle Storage and Maintenance Facility (VSMF) site**

After consultation with the City's Public Works Solid Waste Division, it is noted that the site is planned to be used for several years into the future for a variety of uses, including a construction spoil site, temporary storage for yard waste recycling, and other landfill uses. Based on the site visit on August 12<sup>th</sup>, with the site manager (Cheryl Cole), it was pointed out that the lifespan for the city's use could be as little as 8 years.

Cheryl also pointed out that if a suitable alternative site in the central part of town could be found, that could possibly be acceptable.

We appreciate you and the HDR team expanding the analysis to include two additional sites, including the Sykes site and the Great Neck location, including the additional property the City is considering acquiring at that site as part of our BRAC conformity program.

We acknowledge that you need to narrow down the choices as the study moves forward. We appreciate you considering the other two sites, in addition to the original choice, for further evaluation, and look forward to the recommendation from this evaluation.

Historically, the North Oceana site was a borrow pit for the construction of I-264. The City acquired it from VDOT when the majority of the site was a 'lake', with depths of 30 feet. The 'island' shaped parcel within is the Upper Wolfsnare House historical property and it was an island when we took the property. Particular attention needs to be paid to this site for impacts on the historic structure and site.

The borrow pit was filled 'dry' by three major events: disposal of the dredged material from the construction of Canal No. 2, the dredging of the Eastern Branch of the Lynnhaven, and then the dredging of 35 or so 'private' or 'ancillary' dredging projects. Once in the dry, and no longer a viable option for hydraulic (pipeline) dredged material disposal, the site was transferred to the Public Works Department. They received permits for the construction debris landfill, and have added another 10-foot of elevation to the property.

The 'ground' within the filled borrow pit is underlain by a 30-foot thick layer of hydraulically placed dredged material. Over top of that is 10 feet or so of 'waste' excavation and debris from roadway and stormwater maintenance projects. Any major



Ms. Jayne Whitney  
Subject: Response to July 9, 2010 Letter  
August 17, 2010  
Page 3

structure or paving to be built on this land will have to be carefully designed as there will likely be settlement for some time into the future.

As for documentation of past uses on the site, we have started an internal records search within our Public Works department. We will make sure to share any documentation that turns up with the project team as we continue our research.

The City will continue to work with HRT in discussions with the US Navy regarding any issues with each of the three potential sites, as well as other Navy related issues in regards to this study and project.

#### **4. Multi-use Trail Feasibility**

The Parks and Recreation department has undertaken a preliminary analysis of several aspects to the construction of a potential multi-use trail in or adjacent to the corridor.

- They have conducted a survey map of the corridor highlighting adjacent city-owned properties and easements that may be able to contain a trail.
- Currently reviewing the corridor identifying chokepoints, bottlenecks, and other obstacles in greater detail.
- Developing broad suggestions/recommendations for a combined transit corridor/shared use path within the "enlarged" corridor, including adjacent properties.

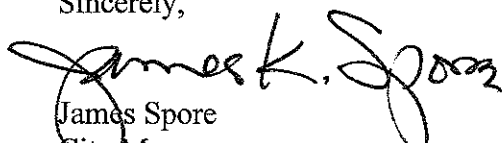
These finished products will be shared with HRT and the consultant team upon completion, which should be done by the end of August.

#### **5. Agency Coordination**

The City will continue to assist HRT in working with the US Navy and NAS Oceana in issues related to their site. We will also assist in communicating with the FAA for impact on their properties and operations.

Thank you again for the continued coordination on this project with the City of Virginia Beach. We look forward to our continued partnership. Please do not hesitate to contact me or members of our organization if you need additional assistance or input.

Sincerely,

  
James Spore  
City Manager



3400 Victoria Boulevard, Hampton, Virginia 23661  
Phone: 757-222-6000 ~ Southside Fax: 757-222-6103  
Peninsula Fax: 757-222-6195 ~ [www.hrtransit.org](http://www.hrtransit.org)

November 22, 2010

Ms. Cindy Whitten  
Federal Aviation Administration  
FAA Kansas City International Airport  
ATCT/TRACON  
#4 International Square  
Kansas City, MO 64153

RE: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study

Dear Ms. Whitten:

Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) in conjunction with the City of Virginia Beach is developing a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement and conceptual design for a potential extension of The TIDE light rail transit system currently under construction in Norfolk, Virginia to the Oceanfront area of Virginia Beach, Virginia. As part of the environmental review, HRT is seeking to coordinate with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in regards to key project issues as they relate to operations at Naval Air Station Oceana (Apollo Soucek Field- NTU). These issues will be addressed as part of the current National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process which is the framework for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES).

Based on the general project description provided, HRT requests a preliminary review of the potential impacts to operational air space or information on the preferred method to identify potential impacts and coordinate with the FAA as the project moves forward. Below are specific details related to the VBTES project:

**Section A: General Description of Railroad Right-of-Way:** The existing Norfolk Southern Alignment, which this project will use, runs due west-east, starting in Norfolk and running to Birdneck Road (see **Attachment 1**). The 66-foot wide right-of-way is currently owned fee-simple by the City of Virginia Beach. In the vicinity of NAS Oceana, the alignment is north of Potters Road. It bisects property that has been purchased by the U.S. Navy.

The railroad alignment was established and the first passengers rode the line from Norfolk to the newly developed resort area on July 17, 1883. Passengers continued to use the line in 1940 when the US Navy began to purchase land for what would become NAS Oceana. However, since the late 1990's rail service on the alignment has been significantly diminished, and in recent years has been stopped completely.

**Section B: Proposed Action**

As one of the Build Alternatives under consideration, HRT is proposing to construct and operate a two track electrically powered light rail transit system on the existing Norfolk Southern alignment. Generally, the system will include station stops at key intersections, park and ride facilities, traction power substations, a vehicle maintenance facility, and other ancillary support facilities. The system is consistent with and supportive of the City of Virginia Beach's Comprehensive Plan. The proposed alignment will

include the two tracks on rock ballast, drainage ditches, and poles supporting the overhead catenary system (OCS). The typical section of the alignment is shown in **Attachment 2**.

Station stops are simple concrete 14-inch high concrete platforms covered by a canopy. Some stations will include parking lots, while others will only include bus transfer facilities. The exact size and footprint of each station stop has not been determined, however, preliminary station stops in the vicinity of NAS Oceana have been identified and are shown in Attachment 1 and include Great Neck/London Bridge, Oceana and Birdneck. The station platforms and canopy will be located entirely within the existing right-of-way.

The system is powered by an overhead catenary system providing 750 VDC to the railcar by way of a pantograph. The wires are supported by poles located between the two tracks. The height of the poles will vary depending on site conditions, but should not exceed 24-feet. The poles are located approximately 100-feet apart within existing the right-of-way (**Attachment 3**).

At various key intersections along the alignment, the track way may be on over-grade bridges. These bridges will provide a minimum of 16-feet of vertical clearance under the structure. Depending on structural conditions, the overall height of the structure may be nearly 60-feet over the existing ground level including catenary pole heights but within the existing right-of-way (**Attachment 4**).


In summary, the key FAA issues related to NAS Oceana include:

1. Constructing potential physical obstructions that may impact air operations including a new over grade bridge at London Bridge Road
2. Catenary poles along the alignment

The current estimated mid-year point of construction is 2018. To date, HRT has not conducted any air space studies for this project. HRT would be happy to make our engineering and operations staff and consultants available to discuss specific areas of concern with regard to the physical characteristics of the project. It would be greatly appreciated if you could confirm how HRT should progress regarding coordination with the FAA on the VBTES, including any examples of relevant studies or related documentation. Please contact me at 757/222-6000 ext. 6699 or [kwaterman@hrtransit.org](mailto:kwaterman@hrtransit.org) with any questions you may have.

We look forward to coordinating with you on this important project for the City of Virginia Beach and the Hampton Roads region as we strive to provide mobility improvements and choices to the community.

Sincerely,

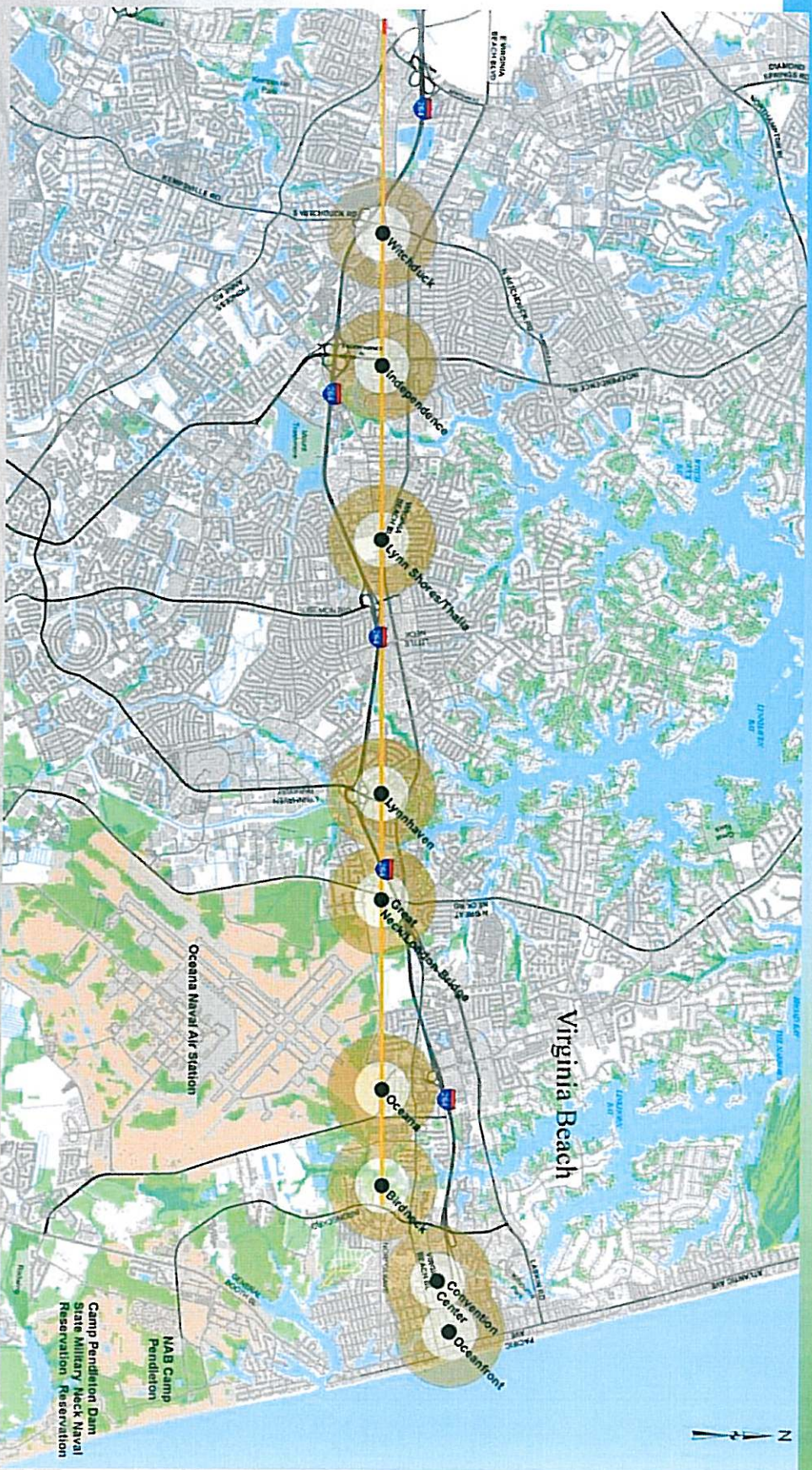
  
Karen Waterman  
Transit Development Manager  
Hampton Roads Transit

Enclosure

Cc: Jayne Whitney, HRT  
Oscar Gonzalez, HDR Engineering  
Eric Nelson, HDR Engineering  
Document Control DV003-44947- CA310-GS-19-10039

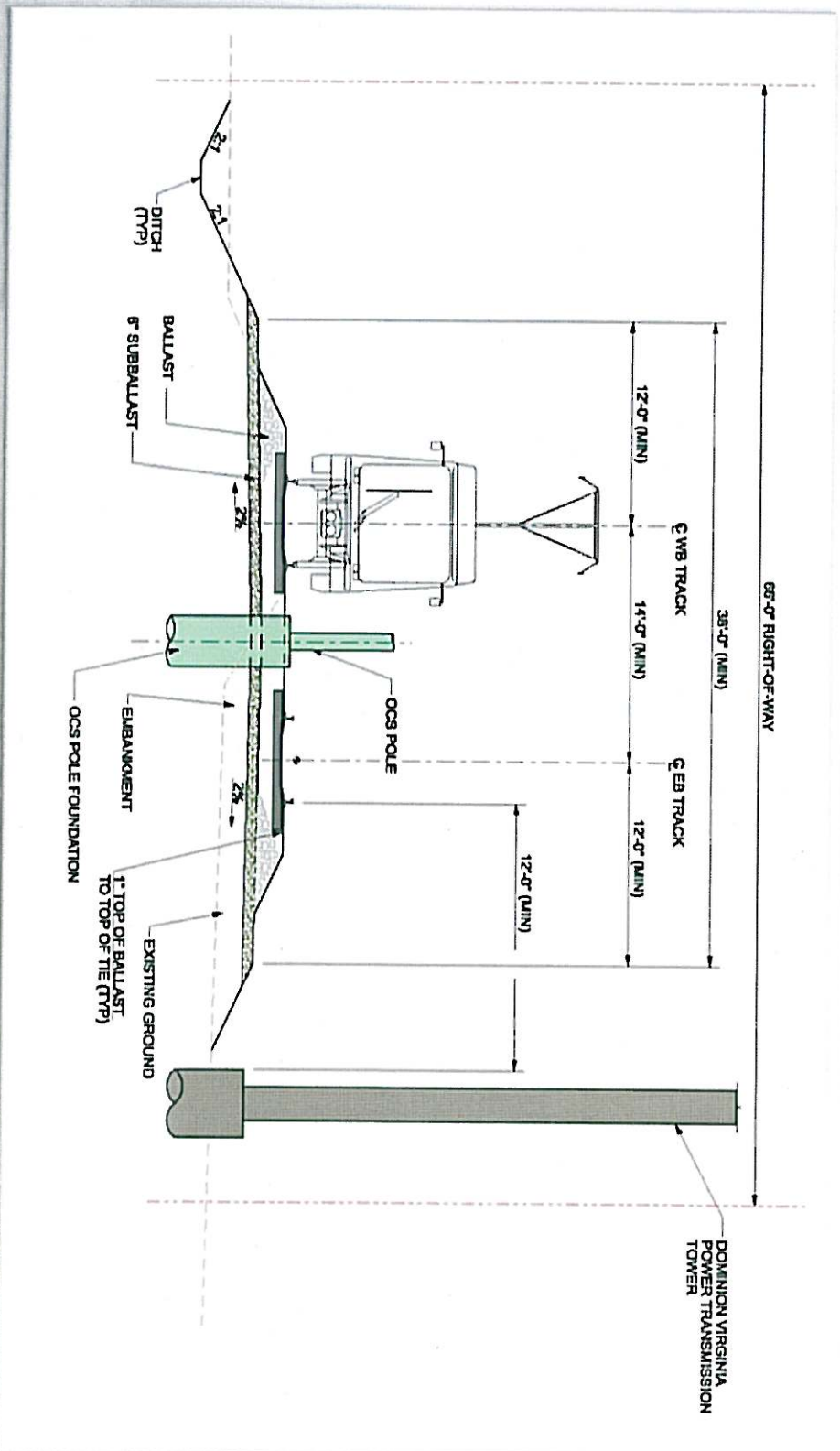


# Attachment 1: VBTES Project Corridor and Station Areas





# Attachment 2: LRT Typical Section





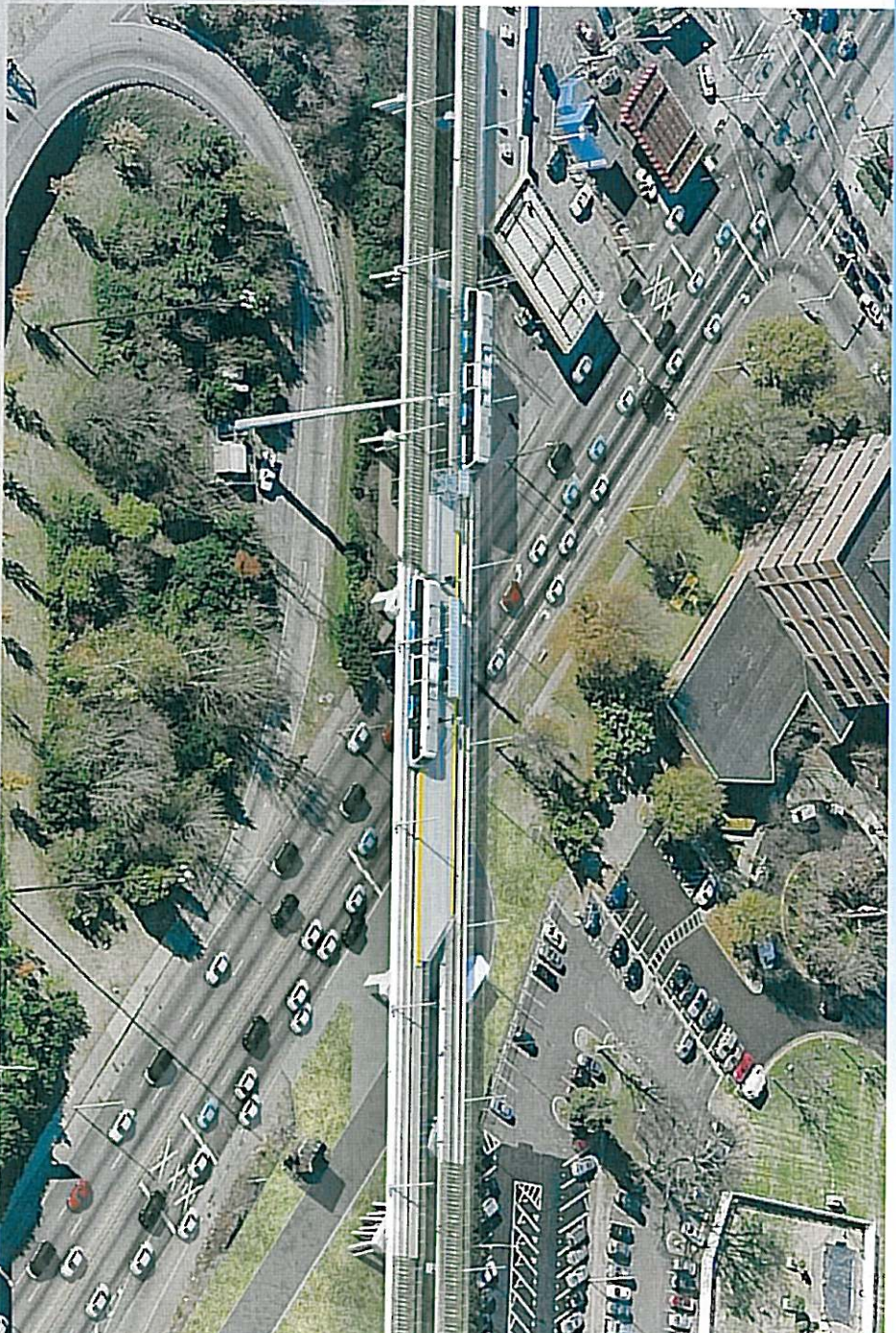
# Attachment 3: Overhead Catenary



Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study Alternatives Analysis/Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement



# Attachment 4: Example of Potential Elevated Crossing





## Karen Waterman

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**From:** Alex.Eckmann@dot.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 30, 2011 4:42 PM  
**To:** Ray Amoruso; Karen Waterman  
**Cc:** James.Ryan@dot.gov; Ken.Cervenka@dot.gov; nazrul.islam@dot.gov; tony.cho@dot.gov  
**Subject:** FW: FTA comments on Virginia Beach alternatives and the travel forecasting

Ray and Karen,

The following message from Jim Ryan constitutes FTA's comments on the Virginia Beach transit corridor AA study's travel forecasting methodology and description of alternatives presented to FTA at our meeting with HRT on Tuesday, March 28. Please include these proposals in your further development of the AA study and forecasting methodology.

Feel free to provide questions or requests for clarification you may have regarding these comments.

Alex Eckmann  
Transportation Planning and Environment  
Federal Transit Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, E45-314  
Washington, DC, 20590

Tel: (202) 493-0513

Fax: (202) 493-2478

---

**From:** Ryan, James (FTA)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 29, 2011 10:24 AM  
**To:** Eckmann, Alex (FTA)  
**Cc:** Cervenka, Kenneth (FTA); Islam, Nazrul (FTA)  
**Subject:** FTA comments on Virginia Beach alternatives and the travel forecasting

### 1. Validation of the travel model

The travel model used by AECOM to prepare forecasts for the Norfolk rail project is the best-available method for preparing VA Beach forecasts. Given the results of the limited data collection for bus routes in the VA Beach part of the east-west corridor, it is not clear that transit markets in that part of the corridor are sufficiently developed to support any useful tests of or adjustments to the model. Further, hypotheses on other transit markets -- workers in beachfront hotels and restaurants, tourists, sailors from in-port ships, etc. -- seem unsupported by currently available data. Therefore, no adjustment to the AECOM model seems appropriate at this point.

Some investigation is needed into the performance of the model with respect to express buses, however. Current ridership forecasts suggest that the model accurately predicts very few express bus riders today but also predicts more than 4,000 rail riders on a VA Beach extension. An explanation of these two results is necessary to ensure the credibility of the forecasts for the various alternatives.

### 2. Data and model tests on initial rail ridership

The opening of the Norfolk rail line will be of substantial importance to the travel model and forecasts for VA Beach alternatives. Experience elsewhere clearly indicates the uncertainties inherent in forecasts for initial fixed-guideway lines. Ridership experience on the initial line is therefore crucial for testing, and potentially



updating, the travel model. HRT should be thinking about the early assembly of data on initial rail ridership after a few months revenue operations. Data from automated passenger counters are one obvious source -- assuming the successful calibration of the APCs and capture of the data records. A limited rider survey might be useful -- along the lines employed by both Charlotte and Phoenix to obtain early snapshots of their ridership well in advance of the large "after" survey nearly two years later. In any case, forecasts for fixed-guideway alternatives in the VA Beach part of the corridor will be substantially more credible if the travel model is tested against initial rail ridership experience. Preparation of an opening-year forecast, using "actual" demographics, transit service levels, and other current conditions, is an important part of this effort that can begin immediately -- and should be completed BEFORE the rail line begins revenue operations. Significant differences between predicted and actual initial ridership will probably required an update to the travel model before final forecasts for the VA Beach alternatives can be prepared.

### 3. Comparisons of weighted travel times

Regardless of the model's grasp of ridership response to new fixed guideways, much can be learned from straightforward comparisons of point-to-point travel times provided by the alternatives. A thematic map plotting the difference in travel time to downtown Norfolk between, say, a light rail alternative and the TSM alternative would shed substantial light on the service differences for travelers from all points in the VA Beach part of the corridor. Similar plots might also be prepared for other destinations. The plots would use weighted travel times (with weights that mirror those in the mode-choice utility expression for transit) for the best walk-access paths and, separately, the best drive-access paths. Comparisons of this nature may also be useful to illuminate service differences between pairs of "build" alternatives -- rail versus BRT, or full-length rail versus a shorter rail extension.

### 4. 2011 forecasts

A set of forecasts for all alternatives in 2011 would remove uncertainties associated with future demographics, congestion, etc., and enhance the understanding -- and credibility -- of the outyear forecasts.

### 5. TSM alternative

In a corridor thought to have potential ridership markets large enough to support rail service, it would seem that the express bus component of the TSM alternative could be structured with individual express bus routes service each of several park-ride lots near freeway interchanges in the corridor. The expresses would provide a one-seat ride to the Newtown Road rail station and, potentially, to downtown Norfolk. Careful review of the ridership forecasts will be necessary to ensure the appropriate levels of investment and frequency of service for both the BRT-like service on VA Beach Blvd. and the express services on I-264.

### 6. BRT alternative

First, since the BRT alternative will require a transfer at Newtown Road station, its service plan should seek to avoid forced transfers east of that station. An obvious strategy towards this end would be to integrate feeder services with BRT line-haul services. Where a sufficiently large market exists, BRT buses would operate off the BRT guideway to collect and distribute passengers and proceed via the BRT guideway to Newtown Road. The potential for integrated feeder/line-haul BRT service might usefully be gleaned from a review of bus-rail transfers in the rail alternatives: new stations with the largest number of transfers are the best candidates for integrated BRT service. Second (and independent of the first BRT comment), off-line stops at BRT stations would permit a mix of local, skip-stop, and express services on the BRT facility. Tests of the rider productivity of such mixed service would indicate the potential importance of an off-line-stop design.

### 7. Rail alternatives

Shorter rail alternatives will require revisions to the bus component of the transit service plan for each shorter alternative. They will also require careful consideration of access coding to station park-ride lots: different coding conventions are probably appropriate for an individual station when it is the eastern rail terminus instead of a line station. Thematic maps of weighted drive-access travel times might help to ensure similar geographic

coverage across the alternatives so that there are no "cliff-effects" associated with different park-ride accessibility to rail service.



3400 Victoria Boulevard, Hampton, Virginia 23661  
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Peninsula Fax: 757-222-6195 ~ [www.hrtransit.org](http://www.hrtransit.org)

April 1, 2011

Beth Day  
Director, Office of Project Planning  
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Transit Administration  
East Building, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Virginia Beach Alternatives Analysis (AA) /Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Analysis (SDEIS)

Dear Ms. Day:

I'm seeking clarification on a number of issues raised by FTA regarding the Virginia Beach AA/SDEIS at a meeting this past week with HRT staff and study consultant, HDR, and a subsequent phone call and email (see attached). Our understanding of FTA's latest guidance implies significant impacts to the study scope, schedule and budget.

HRT has already incurred costs of \$2.7 million to complete the AA/SDEIS. Obviously, the preservation of the remaining public dollars to complete the study is critical. Therefore, HRT has issued a stop work notice to HDR until we have written clarification from FTA on these important matters.

#### **Definition of Alternatives**

- Is the development of Minimum Operable Segments or phasing of a project no longer acceptable to the FTA within the New Starts program?
- HRT staff has been coordinating with FTA's designees on the Definition of Alternatives since the beginning of the project. The new guidance on this subject from FTA this past week comes from staff not previously involved. Please confirm for me, specifically, who HRT should be coordinating with at FTA on this subject and who has responsibility for approving the study's alternatives.

#### **Data and model tests on initial rail ridership:**

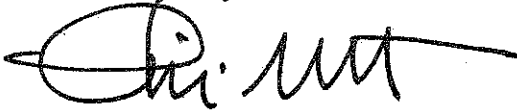
- Will FTA wait to accept the travel forecast for the Virginia Beach study only after Norfolk Light Rail's actual ridership is compared to Norfolk Light Rail's travel forecast? If so, how many months of actual ridership are needed for the comparison?

- Will FTA review and approve aspects of the study involving other New Starts criteria, such as land use and environmental benefit, before accepting the study's travel forecast? If so, which aspects can proceed?
- An opening year forecast was completed for the Norfolk project. Why is HRT required to run a new opening year forecast?

I appreciate your review of this letter and look forward to your response. The sooner we receive clarification on these items, the sooner we can resume work.

Please contact me directly at (757) 222-6159 or [pshucet@hrtransit.org](mailto:pshucet@hrtransit.org) with any questions.

Sincerely,



Philip A. Shucet,  
President and CEO

Attachment

Cc:

Letitia Thompson, FTA

Jim Ryan, FTA

Alex Eckmann, FTA

Tony Cho, FTA

Amy Inman, VDRPT

James Spore, City of Virginia Beach

DV003-49947-EX516-GS-19-12016



U.S. Department  
Of Transportation  
**Federal Transit  
Administration**

Headquarters

1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E.  
Washington DC 20590

April 8, 2011

Philip Shucet  
President and CEO  
Hampton Roads Transit  
3400 Victoria Boulevard  
Hampton, VA 23661

Dear Mr. Shucet:

Thank you for your April 1, 2011 letter seeking clarification on issues related to the Alternatives Analysis (AA) under way for the Virginia Beach corridor study.

I'll briefly address your most substantive questions in this letter, followed by clarification about appropriate points of contact at the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

First, you asked whether FTA allows minimum operable segments or project phasing. It is up to local decision makers—not FTA—to determine choice of mode, alignment, corridor length, and whether a project will be implemented in phases. If HRT selects a phased approach, then FTA will treat each phase as a separate project and evaluate and rate each in accordance with our New Starts process.

Second, you asked whether FTA will wait to accept the travel forecast for the Virginia Beach AA until after it can be prepared using knowledge gained from actual ridership experience on the Norfolk Light Rail line once it is operational. HRT may proceed with developing the forecasts for the Virginia Beach AA using the current travel forecasting model—but only after FTA's concerns on the performance of express buses in the model and service plans for the alternatives have been addressed. As HRT moves closer to selecting a locally preferred alternative for the Virginia Beach corridor and submitting a project for consideration into preliminary engineering, FTA will then consider the timing in relation to the opening of the Norfolk rail line and make a determination.

Third, you asked about the timing of FTA's New Starts project evaluation and rating process, specifically the land use and environmental benefits evaluations. It is too soon to address this issue. FTA typically does not begin the formal evaluation and rating process until (a) the AA is complete, (b) a locally preferred alternative has been selected and adopted into the region's long-range transportation plan, and (c) FTA concurs with the travel forecasts. That said, FTA may be willing to consider rearranging the timing of the land use review for the locally preferred alternative, if circumstances warrant.



Fourth, you asked whether an updated opening year ridership forecast for the Norfolk project is required. An updated forecast is necessary if assumptions about demographic conditions, transit service levels, and other information used to prepare the existing forecast several years ago do not match actual conditions in 2011. An updated forecast will be essential for comparisons of actual light rail ridership to the model's estimate. If the assumptions used previously were on target, then no updated forecast is needed.

I want to acknowledge your question about appropriate points of contact at FTA. As you might know, FTA uses a team-based approach to managing major capital investment studies. Each team includes planners, engineers, environmental protection specialists, and grant specialists, each of whom possesses the expertise necessary to help you as the project progresses. Alex Eckmann is FTA's team leader for the Virginia Beach AA, and the individual with whom HRT has been and should continue to be coordinating.

Finally, as you continue with the Virginia Beach AA, please remember that development of alternatives is an iterative process, meaning that final operating plans for each alternative are likely to differ from the initial plans because they would reflect the location, level, and nature of the predicted ridership response. As HRT develops detailed service plans for the alternatives under consideration and obtains further ridership results, FTA should be provided materials for review. Further comments from FTA and refinements to the service plans are likely.

I hope I have addressed your questions. If I can be of further assistance, do not hesitate to contact me at 202-366-5159 or [elizabeth.day@dot.gov](mailto:elizabeth.day@dot.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Day". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly legible.

Elizabeth Day  
Director  
Office of Project Planning



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Phone: 757-222-6000 ~ Southside Fax: 757-222-6103  
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May 2, 2011

Ms. Letitia A. Thompson  
Regional Administrator, Region III  
Federal Transit Administration  
1760 Market Street  
Suite 500  
Philadelphia, 19103-4124

**Subject:** Status of Virginia Beach Alternatives Analysis (AA)/Supplemental Draft  
Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS)

Dear Ms. Thompson:

Following HRT's letter to Ms. Elizabeth Day dated April 1, 2011 and her response dated April 8, 2011, HRT, in coordination with the City of Virginia Beach, has evaluated the best way to proceed regarding the Virginia Beach AA/SDEIS. This letter is to provide a summary of the study's current status and next steps.

### **Study Schedule**

HRT has decided to pause the study until nine to twelve months of ridership data is available from The Tide in Norfolk. This will enable the travel forecasting model to be calibrated based on actual ridership results. After this ridership has been collected and the model calibrated, HRT will restart the AA/SDEIS. It is anticipated that the study will begin again in the third quarter of 2012 and will be completed by the end of 2013.

### **Project Definition and FTA Coordination**

When it begins again, the AA/SDEIS will include evaluation of phasing options for the Light Rail Transit (LRT) and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) alternatives. HRT will use the intervening months to coordinate with FTA Region III and FTA Headquarters staff regarding ridership forecasting methodology, the definition of the baseline alternative, and the BRT build alternative.

Ms. Letitia A. Thompson  
May 2, 2011  
Page Two

HRT staff will contact FTA staff in May 2011 regarding these items. Until the Virginia Beach AA/SDEIS begins again in 2012, the project consultant will only be engaged in a limited capacity to assist in coordination with FTA.

Sincerely,



Ray Amoruso,  
Chief Planning and Development Officer

Cc:

Sherry Riklin, FTA – Acting Associate Administrator for Planning & Environment  
Elizabeth Day, FTA – Director, Office of Project Planning  
Alex Eckmann, FTA – Community Planner, Office of Project Planning & Environment  
Jim Ryan, FTA – Acting Director, Office of Planning Methods  
Tony Cho, FTA – Community Planner, Region III  
Amy Inman, VDRPT – Transit Planning Manager  
James Spore, City of Virginia Beach – City Manager  
Mark Schnauffer, City of Virginia Beach – Transportation Planning Coordinator  
Philip Shucet, HRT – President and CEO  
Karen Waterman, HRT – Transit Development Officer

Document Control: DV003-49947-EX516-GS-19-10037



# City of Virginia Beach

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MUNICIPAL CENTER  
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2401 COURTHOUSE DRIVE  
VIRGINIA BEACH, VA 23456-9001

April 24, 2012

Mr. William Harrell  
President and CEO  
Hampton Roads Transit  
509 East 18<sup>th</sup> Street  
Norfolk, Virginia 23510

RE: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study, Hilltop Alternative Alignments

Dear Mr. ~~Harrell~~ <sup>William</sup>:

Thank you and your staff for meeting with me and my staff on April 9. As you may recall, we discussed the possibility of exploring alternative alignments for a potential Light Rail extension east of the proposed Lynnhaven Road station. Our planning team has identified several alternatives that could bring a Light Rail extension to our Hilltop commercial district at First Colonial and Laskin Roads.

We would appreciate HRT considering these alternatives by amending the scope of work for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study to include an alternative analysis to bring the alignment to Hilltop. We would like to explore options of alignment location, right-of-way requirements, costs, and ridership projections. Virginia Beach transportation planning staff will work with your team to identify alternatives to consider.

Based on our discussion on April 9, we understand that the additional funding for this task order is available using CMAQ and/or RSTP funds from the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (TPO). The City of Virginia Beach would make the request for additional funds from the TPO for these additional funds.

We would also like to start this Alternatives Analysis prior to the re-start of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement this fall, and would provide support to your staff in working with the Federal Transit Agency to allow this new task order to move forward as soon as possible.

Thank you for working with us on this new task and please don't hesitate to ask if there's anything you need from us to help move this forward.

With Pride in our City,

James K. Spore  
City Manager

JKS/MS



# HAMPTON ROADS TRANSIT

March 25, 2013

CAPT Robert N. Geis, USN  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Oceana  
1750 Tomcat Boulevard  
Virginia Beach, VA 23460-2191

**SUBJECT: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES)**  
Request for Formal Navy Recognition of Proposed Study Alternatives on NAS Oceana  
Property and on Property Encumbered by NAS Oceana Restrictive Use Easements

**Dear Captain Geis,**

Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study, or VBTES, in order to comply with the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations for major federal actions. In the EIS, Hampton Roads Transit will document and compare transit options (which include both alignment alternatives and light rail transit and bus rapid transit technology alternatives) for a former Norfolk Southern Railroad (NSRR) freight rail corridor. This former NSRR property transit alignment runs from Newtown Road to Birdneck Road in Virginia Beach with an extension to the Oceanfront along 19<sup>th</sup> Street. The proposed project also includes transit stations and park and ride lots along the length of the NSRR alignment.

Hampton Roads Transit, the City of Virginia Beach, and NAS Oceana have been discussing the VBTES project since early 2010. On March 7, 2011 and March 4, 2013, staff from Hampton Roads Transit, the City of Virginia Beach, and NAS Oceana met to discuss proposed changes to alternatives being evaluated in the VBTES EIS. The meetings focused on the proposed NSRR alignment which passes north of NAS Oceana through two Clear Zones (CZ), three Accident Potential Zones (APZ) 1, and one APZ-2. At the time of the first meeting, this alignment included three proposed transit stations, or "station stops", in APZ-1 areas. The meetings addressed each of the following points in detail and developed the associated recommendations for action and approval.

1. **Discussion Point 1:** Under the original VBTES proposed alignment alternative extending between Newtown Road and the Oceanfront, Hampton Roads Transit and the City proposed locating three station stops in APZ-1 areas north of NAS Oceana along the former NSRR alignment. Station stops are considered to be an incompatible land use for APZ-1 by the Navy. One available property for a station stop along the alignment outside of any APZ is on a City-owned property on Potters Road. This property is encumbered by Navy restrictive-use easements that do not allow passenger rail stations.

**Recommendation 1a:** Hampton Roads Transit has removed the three proposed station stops within the APZ-1 areas by consolidating two stations into one on City-owned property on Potters Road and by removing the third station from the conceptual design



plans (Figure 1). The consolidated station on the City-owned property is proposed to include:

- A paved parking area for approximately 300 vehicles
- Two 90-foot long passenger platforms, one each for east- and west-bound trains, (approximately 14-inches above top of rail) which allow for level boarding to the transit vehicles
- A 10-foot high canopy covering at least 30 percent of the platform
- Fare vending equipment on the platform
- Bus pull-offs from Potters Road

The station stop would not include any retail food sales or other passenger amenities such as rest rooms.

**Recommendation 1b:** Navy to identify procedures and requirements to modify restrictive easements to allow for station stop construction and use on the City-owned property on Potters Road if the alignment and station is selected and approved for development under the NEPA and any other associated regulatory processes.

**Recommendation 1c:** Navy to formally commit to modifying restrictive easements necessary to allow for station stop construction and use on the City-owned property on Potters Road if the property is selected and approved for development under the NEPA and any other associated regulatory processes.

2. **Discussion Point 2:** The former NSRR property alignment is located in CZs and APZs north of NAS Oceana. While the Navy agreed to consider the construction and use of light rail infrastructure in CZs as a pre-existing, non-conforming land use, CZ and APZ-1 constraints will prevent City or Hampton Roads Transit development of additional station stops and transit supportive uses in these areas. Hampton Roads Transit and the City proposed two alignment alternatives through the Hilltop area which would avoid the need for incompatible land uses in CZs and minimize transit in APZ-1s. Additional station stops in APZ-2s are also proposed with the new alignment alternatives (Figures 2 and 3).

**Recommendation 2a:** Station stops and park and ride facilities proposed for development under the new Hilltop area alignment alternatives will be submitted to Virginia Beach Planning Department and subsequently reviewed by the joint Virginia Beach/NAS Oceana staff for compatibility with the City's Air Installations Compatible Use Zones (AICUZ) Overlay Zoning Ordinance.

**Recommendation 2b:** The three VBTES alignment alternatives north of NAS Oceana will be submitted to Virginia Beach Planning Department and subsequently reviewed by the joint Virginia Beach/NAS Oceana staff for compatibility with the City's AICUZ Overlay Zoning Ordinance. (Figures 1, 2, and 3).

3. **Discussion Point 3:** The City-owned parcel on Potters Road was identified as the only reasonably available and publically-owned property along the VBTES corridor for a proposed light rail Vehicle Storage and Maintenance Facility (VSMF). Because of the Navy's great concern about locating a station stop to the west of the VSMF in an APZ-1, the Navy proposed siting the

VSMF on the west side of NAS Oceana, utilizing an abandoned rail spur that once served that northwest portion of the station. This would permit the station stop in question to be moved to the Potters Road parcel where it could be configured to meet the limitations imposed by a Navy-owned restrictive use easement over the property. After a tour of the proposed Oceana site for the VSMF by Virginia Beach, HRT and Navy staffs, and after receiving indications of support from Oceana's then Commanding Officer, CAPT James D. Webb, and then Commander Navy Region Mid-Atlantic, RADM Mark Boensel, in March 2011, HRT developed conceptual plans for review and consideration. The conceptual plan (as shown in Figure 4) includes:

- The reconstruction of the 3,250-foot rail connection along the existing/reconstructed rail bed from the main east-west light rail tracks to a new light rail VSMF site on-board NAS Oceana.
- An approximately 100,000-square foot building for light rail vehicle maintenance and associated administrative functions
- A maintenance of way building, and other small buildings may also be constructed
- Storage tracks for the light rail fleet

The Hampton Roads Transit VSMF will be completely segregated by fencing and other appropriate security measures from other Navy property, surrounding streets, and adjacent private land owners. Hampton Roads Transit will provide security within its facility. Airfield perimeter security would be maintained to DOD standards. Emergency access could be permitted between the Hampton Roads Transit facility and other Navy property. Ingress/egress for HRT facility personnel is planned via a new entrance from on London Bridge Road. No access to the VSMF facility will occur from the existing unmanned Navy gate on Potters Road.

**Recommendation 3a:** Navy to formally commit to providing to Hampton Roads Transit approximately 55 acres of predominantly developable land on the west side of NAS Oceana (Figure 4). The 55 acres includes approximately 50 acres for the VSMF site and five acres for the rail spur running from the former NSRR property. This land would only be provided upon completion of the NEPA process for construction and long-term use of a light rail VSMF if applicable based on formal selection of any of the proposed alignment alternatives to the Oceanfront area.

**Recommendation 3b:** Navy to identify procedures and requirements to convey federal property interests to Hampton Roads Transit for construction and long-term use of a light rail VSMF on Navy property, if selected and approved for development under the NEPA study and any other associated regulatory processes.

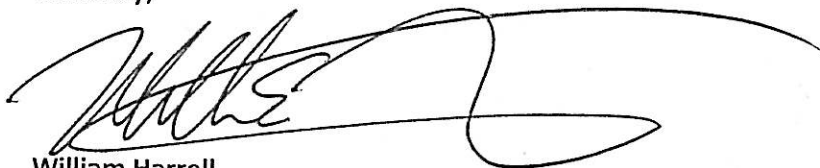
4. **Discussion Point 4:** The Navy is interested in future opportunities to develop a light rail extension to serve NAS Oceana. However, such an alignment is not currently identified in the Hampton Roads Regional Transit Vision Plan or by the City of Virginia Beach, and development of light rail along Oceana Boulevard is not anticipated in the foreseeable future. Under the current transit development process for this region, a proposed transit extension project encompasses a multi-year process that requires review and decision-making under the National Environmental Policy Act, completion of detailed design and final engineering, and identification and commitment of funding sources for construction, operations, and maintenance. Initiation of this process would need to be supported by identification of a substantial level of projected daily riders to the naval installation or surrounding area. This said, there are no identified physical constraints that would render the concept unreasonable.

**Recommendation 4a:** Hampton Roads Transit and the City will document in the VBTES EIS that future extensions of light rail or bus rapid transit service in Virginia Beach outside the study corridor are not currently "reasonably foreseeable" as defined under federal NEPA policies; however, undefined transit extensions may be considered for future study. Hampton Roads Transit and the City will document in the VBTES EIS the navy request that future transit extension studies include the navy-proposed light rail extension along the Oceana Boulevard corridor to serve NAS Oceana. Hampton Roads Transit and the City will commit to assess transit development along the Oceana Boulevard corridor when warranted by potential ridership levels and when reasonable funding sources for study, construction, and operations are identified.

**Hampton Roads Transit and the City of Virginia Beach respectfully ask the Navy to provide formal concurrence and action on the above listed recommendations** contingent on full completion of all required NEPA documentation and decision-making as well as other required agency and regulatory approvals and clearances.

Hampton Roads Transit understands that executing these plans will necessitate a high degree of cooperation and coordination among and between Hampton Roads Transit, the City of Virginia Beach, and Navy organizations including NAS Oceana, Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic, Commander, Navy Installations Command, and Headquarters, Naval Facilities Engineering Command. We very much appreciate your and your staff's participation and interest in the VBTES. If you have any other questions or comments as you consider our proposals, please feel free to contact the VBTES project manager, Julie Timm, at 222-6000 ext. 6699 or [jtimm@hrtransit.org](mailto:jtimm@hrtransit.org). Thank you again for your continued coordination on this project.

Sincerely,



William Harrell,  
President and CEO, Hampton Roads Transit

Attachment with Figures

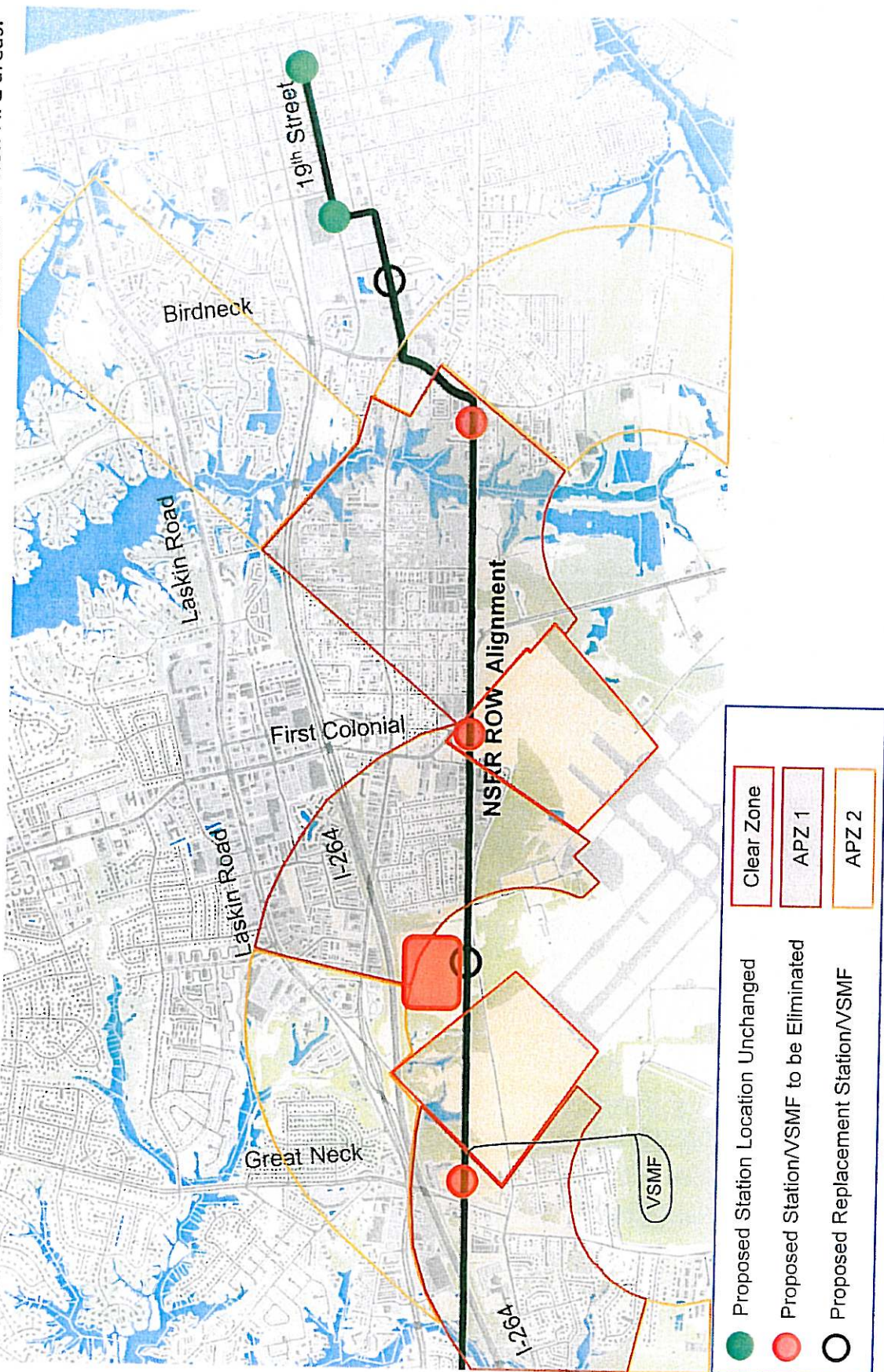
cc: Ray Amoruso, Chief Planning & Development Officer, Hampton Roads Transit  
Julie Timm, Transit Development Officer, Hampton Roads Transit  
Ray Firenze, AICUZ Program Manager, NAS Oceana  
John Lauterbach, Planning Liaison, NAS Oceana  
James Spore, City Manager, City of Virginia Beach  
Steve Herbert, Deputy City Manager, City of Virginia Beach  
Mark Schnauffer, Transportation Planning Coordinator, City of Virginia Beach

Document Control Number: EX 520 – GS-19 12016



# HAMPTON ROADS TRANSIT

FIGURE 1: Removal of Three Proposed Stations and VSMF in CZ and APZ-1 areas. Addition of Stations and VSMF in non-APZ areas.





# HAMPTON ROADS TRANSIT

FIGURE 2: New Hilltop Area Alignment Alternative - Laskin Road to First Colonial Road

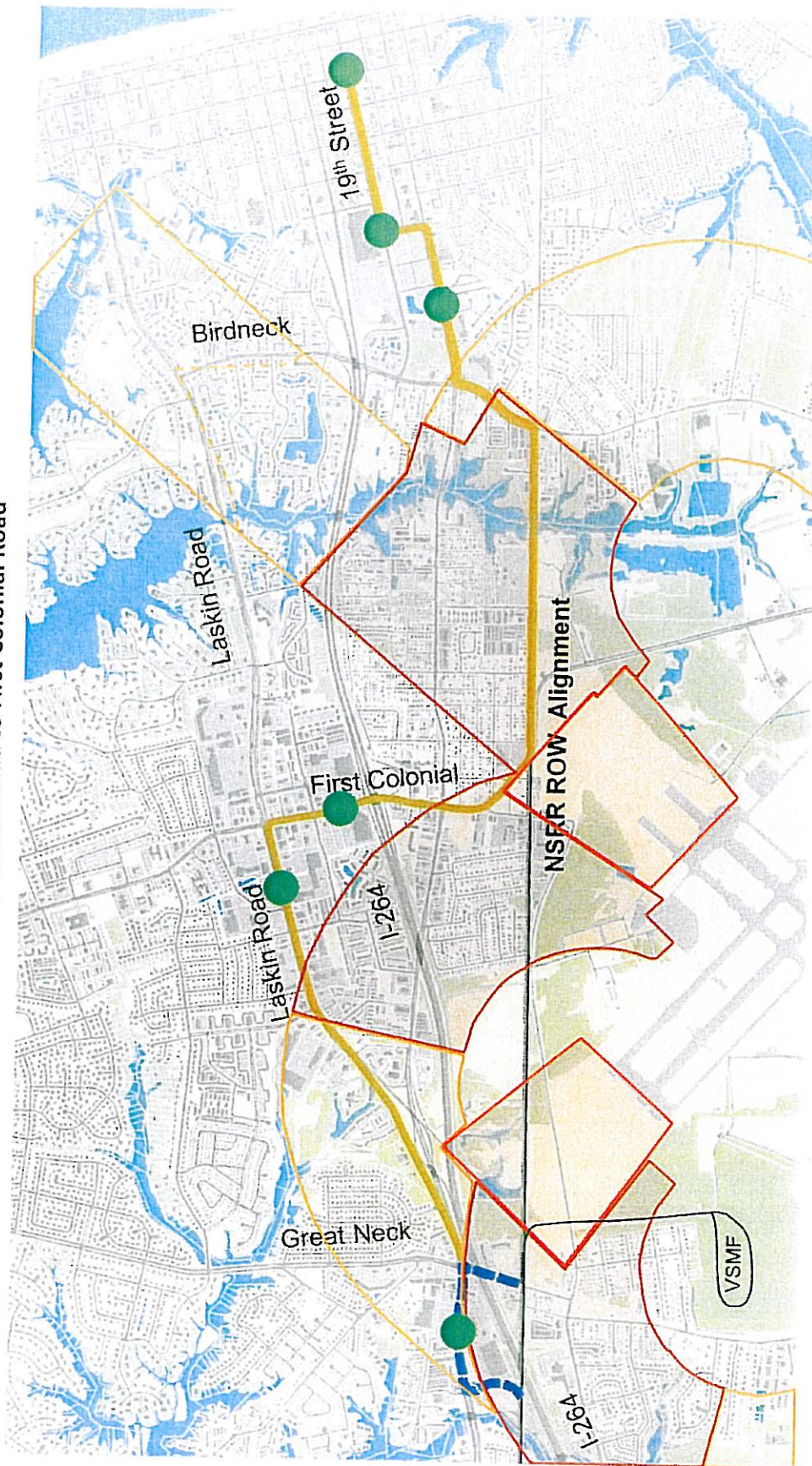
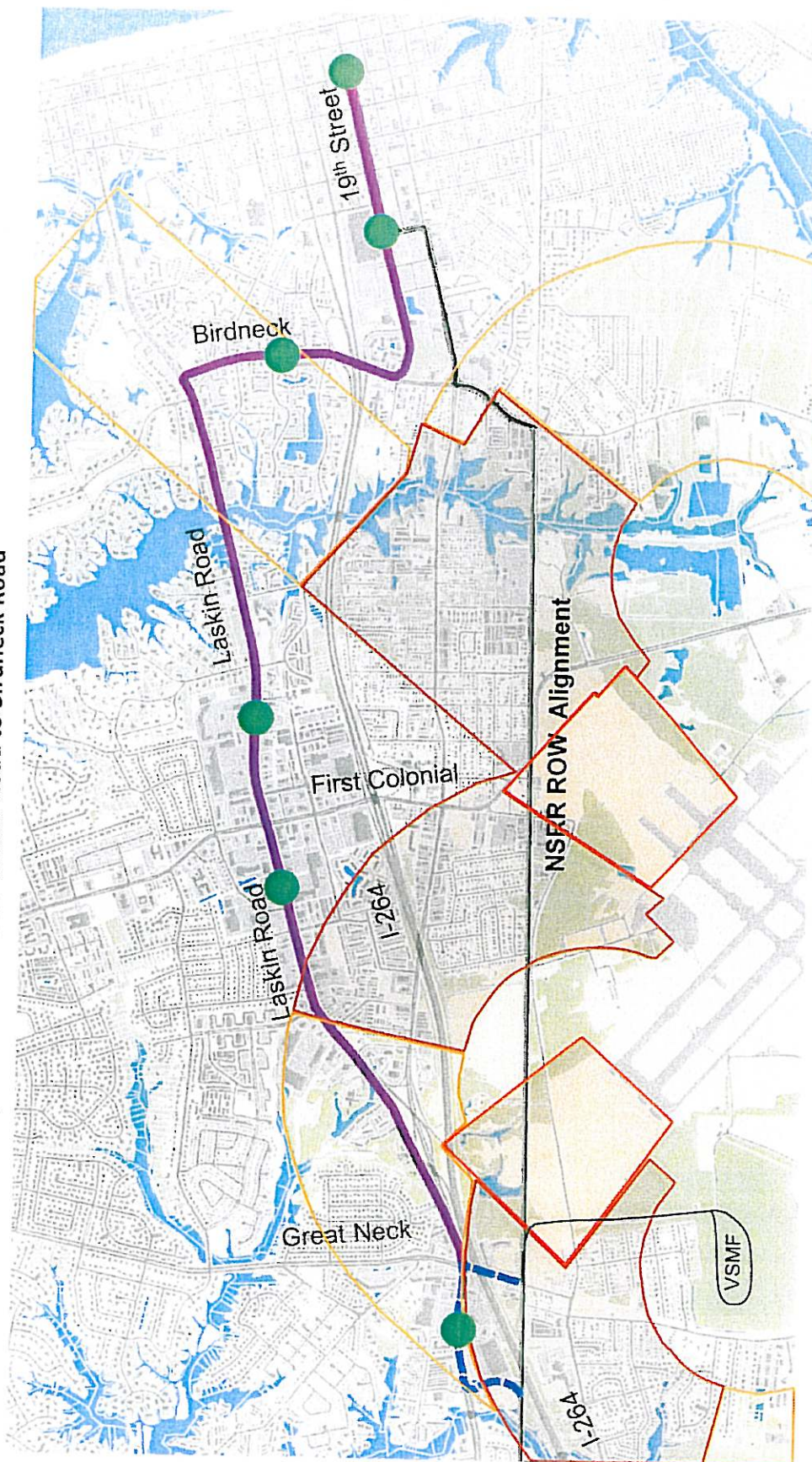




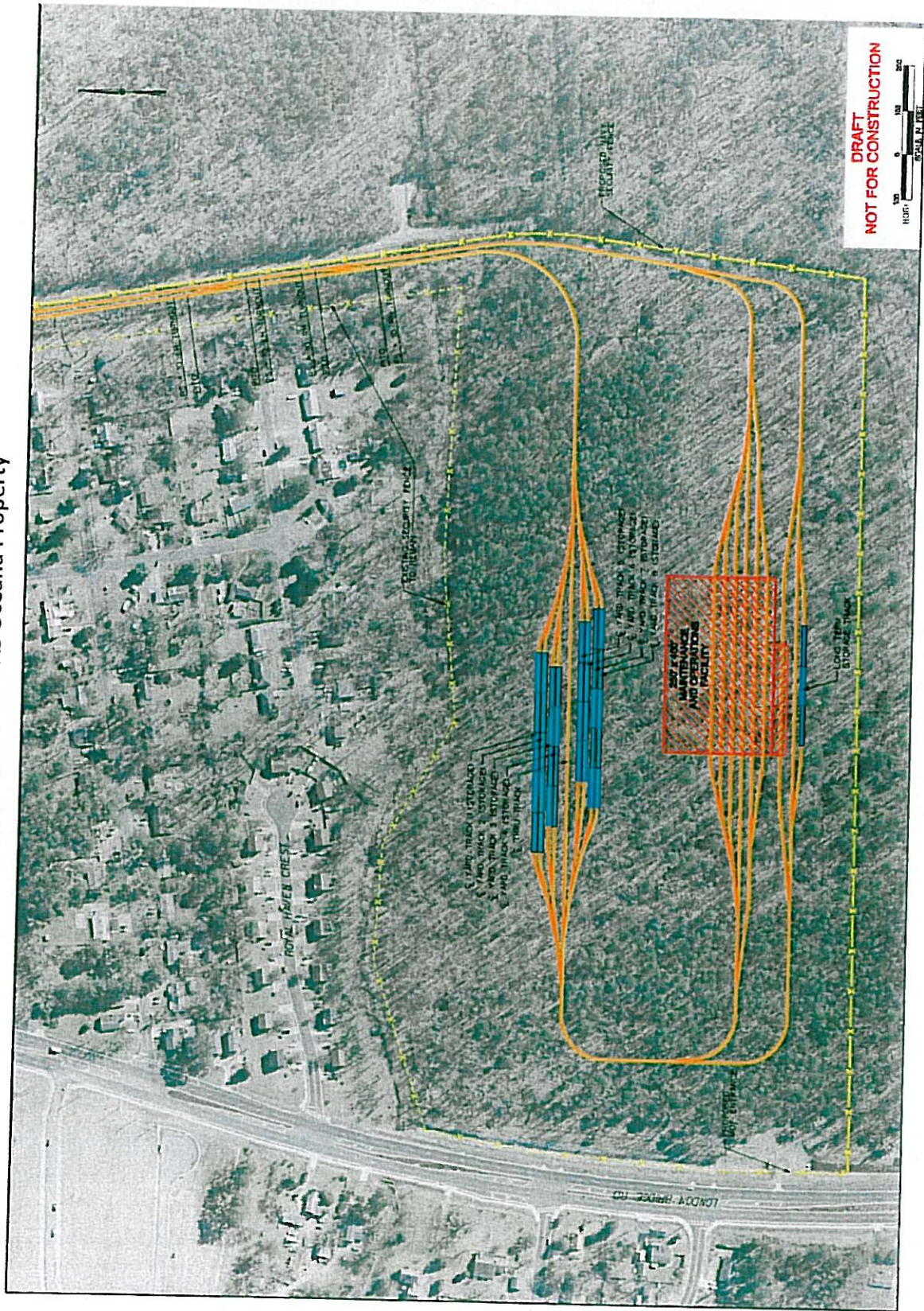
FIGURE 3: New Hilltop Area Alignment Alternative - Laskin Road to Birdneck Road





# HAMPTON ROADS TRANSIT

FIGURE 4: New Proposed Location and Layout of VSMF on NAS Oceana Property







# HAMPTON ROADS TRANSIT

March 25, 2013

CAPT Robert N. Geis, USN  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Oceana  
1750 Tomcat Boulevard  
Virginia Beach, VA 23460-2191

**SUBJECT: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES)**  
Request for Formal Navy Recognition of Proposed Study Alternatives on NAS Oceana Property and on Property Encumbered by NAS Oceana Restrictive Use Easements

Dear Captain Geis,

Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study, or VBTES, in order to comply with the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations for major federal actions. In the EIS, Hampton Roads Transit will document and compare transit options (which include both alignment alternatives and light rail transit and bus rapid transit technology alternatives) for a former Norfolk Southern Railroad (NSRR) freight rail corridor. This former NSRR property transit alignment runs from Newtown Road to Birdneck Road in Virginia Beach with an extension to the Oceanfront along 19<sup>th</sup> Street. The proposed project also includes transit stations and park and ride lots along the length of the NSRR alignment.

Hampton Roads Transit, the City of Virginia Beach, and NAS Oceana have been discussing the VBTES project since early 2010. On March 7, 2011 and March 4, 2013, staff from Hampton Roads Transit, the City of Virginia Beach, and NAS Oceana met to discuss proposed changes to alternatives being evaluated in the VBTES EIS. The meetings focused on the proposed NSRR alignment which passes north of NAS Oceana through two Clear Zones (CZ), three Accident Potential Zones (APZ) 1, and one APZ-2. At the time of the first meeting, this alignment included three proposed transit stations, or "station stops", in APZ-1 areas. The meetings addressed each of the following points in detail and developed the associated recommendations for action and approval.

1. **Discussion Point 1:** Under the original VBTES proposed alignment alternative extending between Newtown Road and the Oceanfront, Hampton Roads Transit and the City proposed locating three station stops in APZ-1 areas north of NAS Oceana along the former NSRR alignment. Station stops are considered to be an incompatible land use for APZ-1 by the Navy. One available property for a station stop along the alignment outside of any APZ is on a City-owned property on Potters Road. This property is encumbered by Navy restrictive-use easements that do not allow passenger rail stations.

**Recommendation 1a:** Hampton Roads Transit has removed the three proposed station stops within the APZ-1 areas by consolidating two stations into one on City-owned property on Potters Road and by removing the third station from the conceptual design

plans (Figure 1). The consolidated station on the City-owned property is proposed to include:

- A paved parking area for approximately 300 vehicles
- Two 90-foot long passenger platforms, one each for east- and west-bound trains, (approximately 14-inches above top of rail) which allow for level boarding to the transit vehicles
- A 10-foot high canopy covering at least 30 percent of the platform
- Fare vending equipment on the platform
- Bus pull-offs from Potters Road

The station stop would not include any retail food sales or other passenger amenities such as rest rooms.

**Recommendation 1b:** Navy to identify procedures and requirements to modify restrictive easements to allow for station stop construction and use on the City-owned property on Potters Road if the alignment and station is selected and approved for development under the NEPA and any other associated regulatory processes.

**Recommendation 1c:** Navy to formally commit to modifying restrictive easements necessary to allow for station stop construction and use on the City-owned property on Potters Road if the property is selected and approved for development under the NEPA and any other associated regulatory processes.

2. **Discussion Point 2:** The former NSRR property alignment is located in CZs and APZs north of NAS Oceana. While the Navy agreed to consider the construction and use of light rail infrastructure in CZs as a pre-existing, non-conforming land use, CZ and APZ-1 constraints will prevent City or Hampton Roads Transit development of additional station stops and transit supportive uses in these areas. Hampton Roads Transit and the City proposed two alignment alternatives through the Hilltop area which would avoid the need for incompatible land uses in CZs and minimize transit in APZ-1s. Additional station stops in APZ-2s are also proposed with the new alignment alternatives (Figures 2 and 3).

**Recommendation 2a:** Station stops and park and ride facilities proposed for development under the new Hilltop area alignment alternatives will be submitted to Virginia Beach Planning Department and subsequently reviewed by the joint Virginia Beach/NAS Oceana staff for compatibility with the City's Air Installations Compatible Use Zones (AICUZ) Overlay Zoning Ordinance.

**Recommendation 2b:** The three VBTES alignment alternatives north of NAS Oceana will be submitted to Virginia Beach Planning Department and subsequently reviewed by the joint Virginia Beach/NAS Oceana staff for compatibility with the City's AICUZ Overlay Zoning Ordinance. (Figures 1, 2, and 3).

3. **Discussion Point 3:** The City-owned parcel on Potters Road was identified as the only reasonably available and publically-owned property along the VBTES corridor for a proposed light rail Vehicle Storage and Maintenance Facility (VSMF). Because of the Navy's great concern about locating a station stop to the west of the VSMF in an APZ-1, the Navy proposed siting the

VSMF on the west side of NAS Oceana, utilizing an abandoned rail spur that once served that northwest portion of the station. This would permit the station stop in question to be moved to the Potters Road parcel where it could be configured to meet the limitations imposed by a Navy-owned restrictive use easement over the property. After a tour of the proposed Oceana site for the VSMF by Virginia Beach, HRT and Navy staffs, and after receiving indications of support from Oceana's then Commanding Officer, CAPT James D. Webb, and then Commander Navy Region Mid-Atlantic, RADM Mark Boensel, in March 2011, HRT developed conceptual plans for review and consideration. The conceptual plan (as shown in Figure 4) includes:

- The reconstruction of the 3,250-foot rail connection along the existing/reconstructed rail bed from the main east-west light rail tracks to a new light rail VSMF site on-board NAS Oceana.
- An approximately 100,000-square foot building for light rail vehicle maintenance and associated administrative functions
- A maintenance of way building, and other small buildings may also be constructed
- Storage tracks for the light rail fleet

The Hampton Roads Transit VSMF will be completely segregated by fencing and other appropriate security measures from other Navy property, surrounding streets, and adjacent private land owners. Hampton Roads Transit will provide security within its facility. Airfield perimeter security would be maintained to DOD standards. Emergency access could be permitted between the Hampton Roads Transit facility and other Navy property. Ingress/egress for HRT facility personnel is planned via a new entrance from on London Bridge Road. No access to the VSMF facility will occur from the existing unmanned Navy gate on Potters Road.

**Recommendation 3a:** Navy to formally commit to providing to Hampton Roads Transit approximately 55 acres of predominantly developable land on the west side of NAS Oceana (Figure 4). The 55 acres includes approximately 50 acres for the VSMF site and five acres for the rail spur running from the former NSRR property. This land would only be provided upon completion of the NEPA process for construction and long-term use of a light rail VSMF if applicable based on formal selection of any of the proposed alignment alternatives to the Oceanfront area.

**Recommendation 3b:** Navy to identify procedures and requirements to convey federal property interests to Hampton Roads Transit for construction and long-term use of a light rail VSMF on Navy property, if selected and approved for development under the NEPA study and any other associated regulatory processes.

4. **Discussion Point 4:** The Navy is interested in future opportunities to develop a light rail extension to serve NAS Oceana. However, such an alignment is not currently identified in the Hampton Roads Regional Transit Vision Plan or by the City of Virginia Beach, and development of light rail along Oceana Boulevard is not anticipated in the foreseeable future. Under the current transit development process for this region, a proposed transit extension project encompasses a multi-year process that requires review and decision-making under the National Environmental Policy Act, completion of detailed design and final engineering, and identification and commitment of funding sources for construction, operations, and maintenance. Initiation of this process would need to be supported by identification of a substantial level of projected daily riders to the naval installation or surrounding area. This said, there are no identified physical constraints that would render the concept unreasonable.

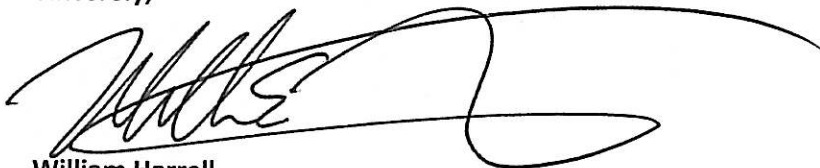


**Recommendation 4a:** Hampton Roads Transit and the City will document in the VBTES EIS that future extensions of light rail or bus rapid transit service in Virginia Beach outside the study corridor are not currently "reasonably foreseeable" as defined under federal NEPA policies; however, undefined transit extensions may be considered for future study. Hampton Roads Transit and the City will document in the VBTES EIS the navy request that future transit extension studies include the navy-proposed light rail extension along the Oceana Boulevard corridor to serve NAS Oceana. Hampton Roads Transit and the City will commit to assess transit development along the Oceana Boulevard corridor when warranted by potential ridership levels and when reasonable funding sources for study, construction, and operations are identified.

**Hampton Roads Transit and the City of Virginia Beach respectfully ask the Navy to provide formal concurrence and action on the above listed recommendations** contingent on full completion of all required NEPA documentation and decision-making as well as other required agency and regulatory approvals and clearances.

Hampton Roads Transit understands that executing these plans will necessitate a high degree of cooperation and coordination among and between Hampton Roads Transit, the City of Virginia Beach, and Navy organizations including NAS Oceana, Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic, Commander, Navy Installations Command, and Headquarters, Naval Facilities Engineering Command. We very much appreciate your and your staff's participation and interest in the VBTES. If you have any other questions or comments as you consider our proposals, please feel free to contact the VBTES project manager, Julie Timm, at 222-6000 ext. 6699 or [jtimm@hrtransit.org](mailto:jtimm@hrtransit.org). Thank you again for your continued coordination on this project.

Sincerely,



**William Harrell,  
President and CEO, Hampton Roads Transit**

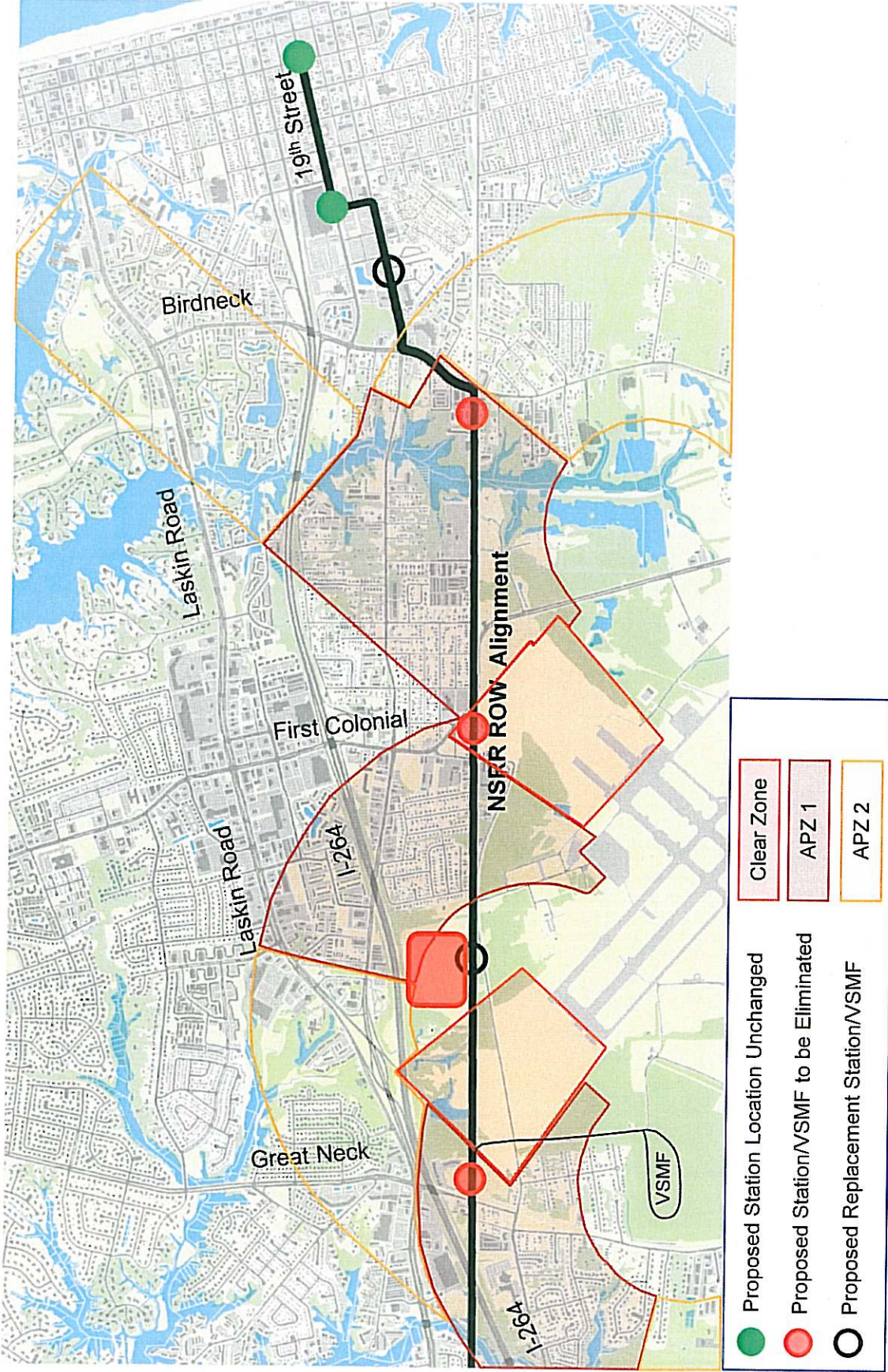
Attachment with Figures

cc: Ray Amoruso, Chief Planning & Development Officer, Hampton Roads Transit  
Julie Timm, Transit Development Officer, Hampton Roads Transit  
Ray Firenze, AICUZ Program Manager, NAS Oceana  
John Lauterbach, Planning Liaison, NAS Oceana  
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Document Control Number: EX 520 – GS-19 12016

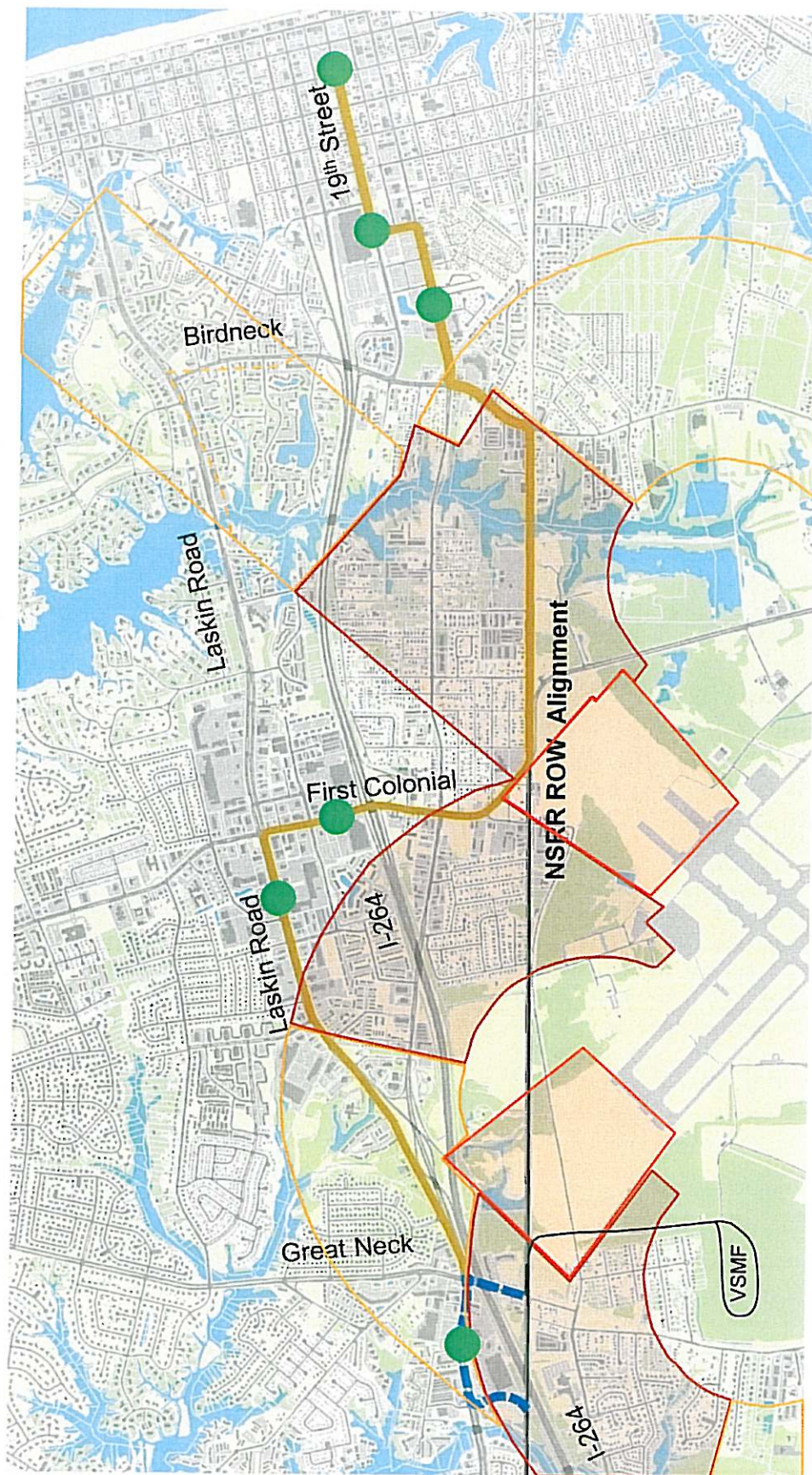
# HAMPTON ROADS TRANSIT

FIGURE 1: Removal of Three Proposed Stations and VSMF in CZ and APZ-1 areas. Addition of Stations and VSMF in non-APZ areas.



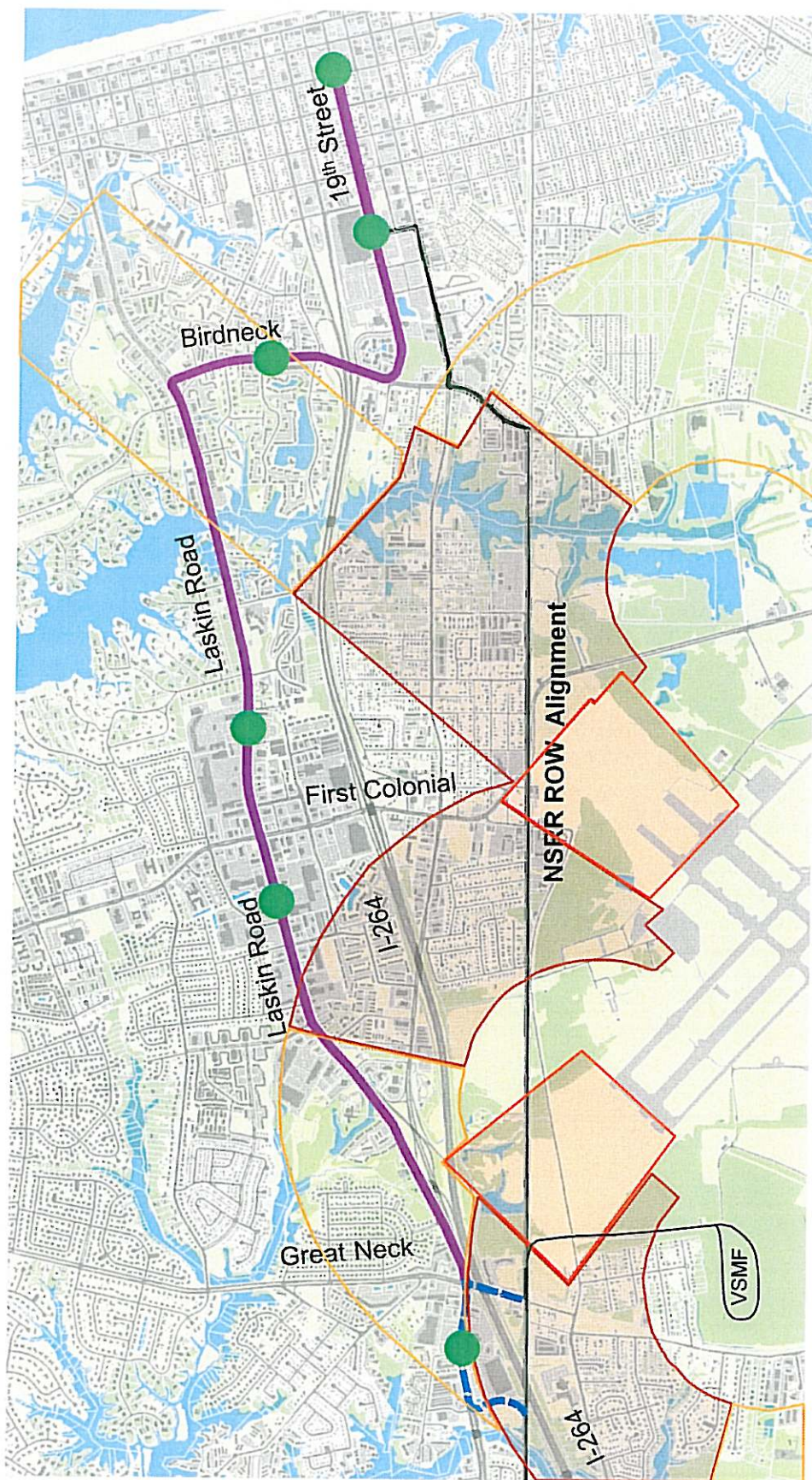


**FIGURE 2: New Hilltop Area Alignment Alternative - Laskin Road to First Colonial Road**



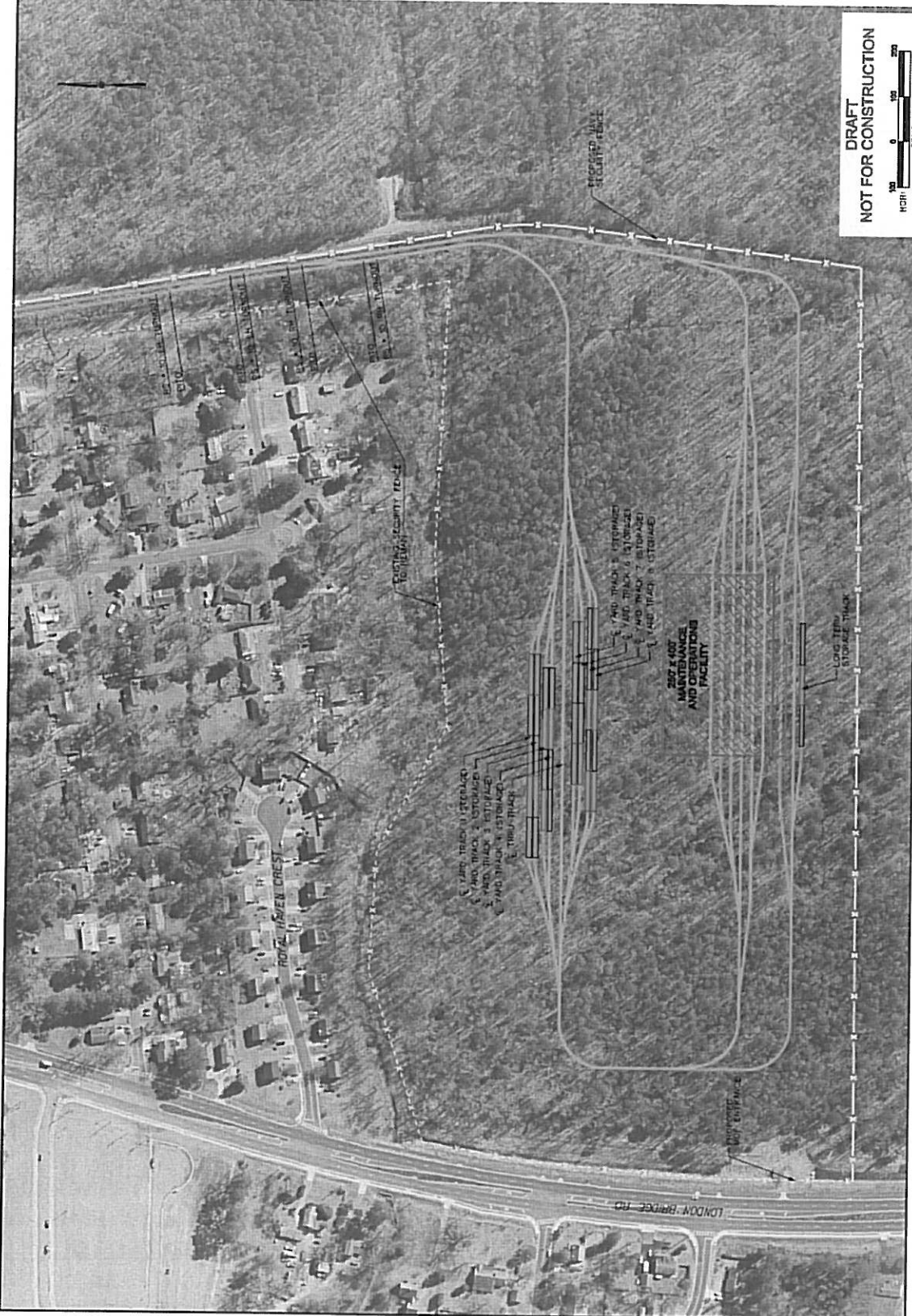


**FIGURE 3: New Hilltop Area Alignment Alternative - Laskin Road to Birdneck Road**





**FIGURE 4: New Proposed Location and Layout of VSMF on NAS Oceana Property**





# HAMPTON ROADS TRANSIT

April 25, 2013

## Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study Request for Utility Coordination

Dear Sir/Madam:

Hampton Roads Transit is in the process of completing the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) by early 2014. This study is examining transit alternatives extending from the Norfolk Tide Light Rail Transit system into Virginia Beach. The VBTES will be completed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended. The project includes evaluation of transit alternatives including development of conceptual engineering designs and the selection of a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). Attached is a map that shows the proposed alignment alternatives and the proposed transit station areas under consideration in the VBTES.

As part of this effort, **we request your participation in a Utility Review Coordination Meeting.** This meeting is needed to be sure HRT can identify any potential utility conflicts prior to going forward into more detailed design and engineering work and so that we can better estimate the potential costs of our proposed designs. This will also help us minimize potential conflicts early in the study process and identify a more complete understanding of the potential impacts of each alternative.

**Currently Hampton Roads Transit is targeting May, 8, 9, or 10, 2013 as dates for this meeting. The meeting location will be in the Hampton Roads Transit Administration Building #4 Board Room on 509 East 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Norfolk, Virginia, 23504.**

**Can you please reply back with your availability for an am or pm meeting on one of these dates?** If possible, I would appreciate a reply by close of business April 26.

If you have any questions about this information, please feel free to contact Julie Timm, Transit Development Officer for Hampton Roads Transit and VBTES Project Manager, at 222-6000 ext. 6699 or [jtimm@hrtransit.org](mailto:jtimm@hrtransit.org).

Thank you for your participation and interest in this project.

Sincerely,

Ray Amoroso  
Chief Planning and Development Officer

Cc: List Attached (Page 2)  
Enclosure (Project area)  
Document Control: EX110-GS-19-1003

## LIST of Recipients for Utility Letter

Mr/Ms	First	Last	Organization	Email
Mr.	Ray	Amoruso	Hampton Roads Transit	<a href="mailto:ramoruso@hrtransit.org">ramoruso@hrtransit.org</a>
Ms.	Julie	Timm	Hampton Roads Transit	<a href="mailto:itimm@hrtransit.org">itimm@hrtransit.org</a>
Mr.	Leroy	Padgett	Hampton Roads Transit	<a href="mailto:lrpadgett@hrtransit.org">lrpadgett@hrtransit.org</a>
Mr.	Don	Lint	Hampton Roads Transit	<a href="mailto:dlint@hrtransit.org">dlint@hrtransit.org</a>
Mr.	Mark	Schnauffer	City of Virginia Beach	<a href="mailto:mschnauf@vbgov.com">mschnauf@vbgov.com</a>
Mr.	Randy	Allen	City of Virginia Beach	<a href="mailto:RWAllen@vbgov.com">RWAllen@vbgov.com</a>
Mr.	David	Ihde	City of Virginia Beach	<a href="mailto:DIHDE@vbgov.com">DIHDE@vbgov.com</a>
Mr.	Mile	Mundy	City of Virginia Beach	<a href="mailto:MMundy@vbgov.com">MMundy@vbgov.com</a>
Mr.	Nelson	Navarro	City of Virginia Beach	<a href="mailto:NNavarro@vbgov.com">NNavarro@vbgov.com</a>
Mr.	Eric	Nelson	HDR Engineering	<a href="mailto:eric.nelson@hdrinc.com">eric.nelson@hdrinc.com</a>
Mr.	Chad	Chandler	HDR Engineering	<a href="mailto:Chad.Chandler@hdrinc.com">Chad.Chandler@hdrinc.com</a>
Mr.	Wayne	Hickson	Verizon	<a href="mailto:wayne.m.hixenbaugh@verizon.com">wayne.m.hixenbaugh@verizon.com</a>
Ms.	Donna	Lynch	Dominion Virginia Power	<a href="mailto:donna.lynch@dom.com">donna.lynch@dom.com</a>
Mr.	Bob	Cumming	Dominion Virginia Power	<a href="mailto:robert.m.cumming@dom.com">robert.m.cumming@dom.com</a>
Mr.	Dambos	Charalambous	Hampton Roads Sanitation District	<a href="mailto:bcharalambous@hrsdc.com">bcharalambous@hrsdc.com</a>
Ms.	Robin	Parker	Cox Communications	<a href="mailto:robin.parker@cox.com">robin.parker@cox.com</a>
Mr.	Kevin	Starke	Virginia Natural Gas	<a href="mailto:kstarke@aglresources.com">kstarke@aglresources.com</a>
Mr.	Gary	Wigfield	AT&T	<a href="mailto:gwigfield@att.com">gwigfield@att.com</a>
Mr.	Ty	Nelson	VDOT	<a href="mailto:Nelson.Lee@VDOT.Virginia.gov">Nelson.Lee@VDOT.Virginia.gov</a>
Mr.	Adam	Jack	VDOT	<a href="mailto:Adam.Jack@VDOT.Virginia.gov">Adam.Jack@VDOT.Virginia.gov</a>



# VBTES Alternative Alignments

## Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study

The Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES) is examining the best transit options for a former freight rail right of way that runs from Newtown Road to Birdneck Road in Virginia Beach. The study area extends from Newtown Road to the Oceanfront area on 19<sup>th</sup> Street.

- Three Fixed Guideway Alignment Alternatives from Newtown Road
  - To the Rosemont Area
  - To the Oceanfront along the NSRR corridor (with Maintenance Facility)
  - To the Oceanfront through the Hilltop Area (with Maintenance Facility)



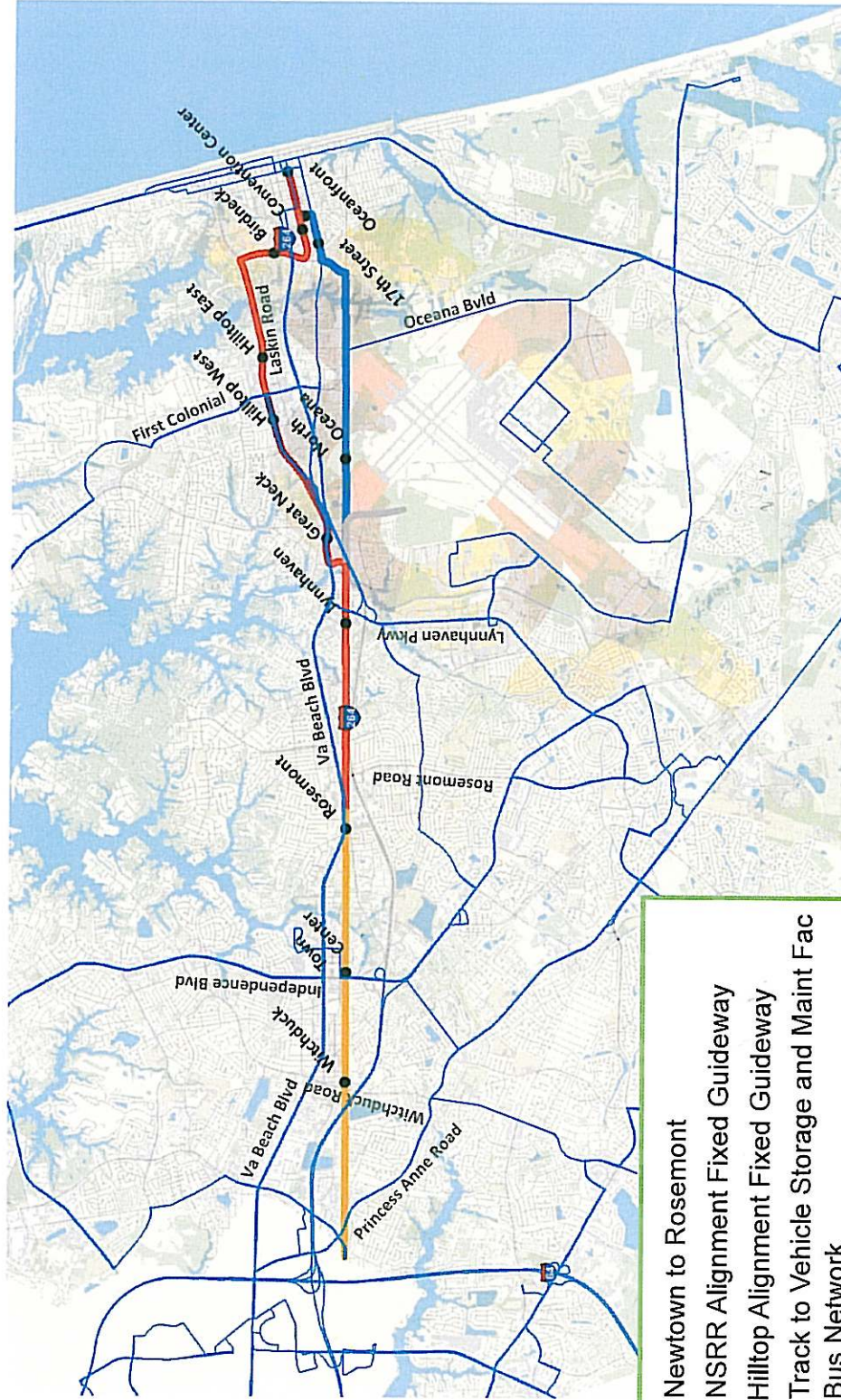
**VIRGINIA BEACH TRANSIT  
EXTENSION STUDY**



HAMPTON ROADS TRANSIT



# VBTES Alternative Alignments



## VIRGINIA BEACH TRANSIT EXTENSION STUDY





FITZGERALD & HALLIDAY, INC.

*Innovative Planning, Better Communities*

72 Cedar Street Hartford, CT 06106

Tel. (860) 247-7200

Fax (860) 247-7206

May 7, 2013

Mary Colligan  
Assistant Regional Administrator  
NOAA Protected Resources Division  
55 Great Republic Drive  
Gloucester, MA 01930

Subject: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

Dear Ms. Colligan,

Under contract to HDR, Inc., Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. (FHI) is assisting Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) with the preparation of the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES) to examine the best transit options available for a former Norfolk Southern Railroad right-of-way in Virginia Beach. Our initial inquiry was submitted to your office in December 2009. Since that time, an alternative fixed-guideway alignment was added to the study process in the Hilltop area along Laskin Road and station locations have been modified and refined. Thus, FHI seeks to re-initiate our coordination efforts with your office and kindly requests any information including a statement of your concerns, if any, relative to potential impacts to marine species. Information provided will be utilized in the preparation Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the project.

The VBTES project involves assessing the environmental impact of various transit alternatives including bus, bus rapid transit, and light rail transit, along approximately 10.8 miles of the former Norfolk Southern Corporation's rail right-of-way in Virginia Beach and eastward to the Oceanfront at 19<sup>th</sup> Street. This inactive rail corridor extends from Newtown Road at the Norfolk-Virginia Beach City line eastward to Birdneck Road in a line roughly parallel to Interstate 264. The Oceanfront extension of the corridor starts at Birdneck Road and stretches along 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Washington Street to 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Arctic. An alternative fixed-guideway alignment to the Oceanfront is also being studied through the Hilltop area along Laskin Road, and two potential locations for a vehicle storage and maintenance facility are also under study. The study corridor is depicted on the attached four map sheets derived from the Kempsville, VA, Princess Anne, VA, and Virginia Beach, VA USGS Topographic Quadrangle Maps. With the exception of several proposed station locations (which are depicted by the "bulb-outs" on the attached map sheets), the study corridor being evaluated is roughly 500 feet wide.

The project proposes to cross a small number of tidally influenced waterways including Thalia Creek, London Bridge Creek, Great Neck Creek, and Upper Linkhorn Bay. Additionally, the project is included in an area mapped by NOAA-National Marine Fisheries Service as Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). Based on data provided on the NERO habitat conservation website (<http://www.nero.noaa.gov/hcd/STATES4/VirgMary.htm>), EFH designations for the project area include:

*Planning Consultants*



- Red hake (eggs, larvae, juveniles, and adults)
- Witch flounder (eggs)
- Yellowtail flounder (larvae)
- Windowpane flounder (eggs, larvae, juveniles, and adults)
- Atlantic sea herring (adults)
- Bluefish (juveniles and adults)
- Atlantic butterfish (eggs, larvae, juveniles, and adults)
- Summer flounder (larvae, juveniles, and adults)
- Scup (larvae, juveniles, and adults)
- Black sea bass (larvae, juveniles, and adults)
- King mackerel (eggs, larvae, juveniles, and adults)
- Spanish mackerel (eggs, larvae, juveniles, and adults)
- Cobia (eggs, larvae, juveniles, and adults)
- Red drum (eggs, larvae, juveniles, and adults)
- Sand tiger shark (larvae and adults)
- Atlantic sharpnose shark (adult)
- Dusky shark (larvae and juveniles)
- Sandbar shark (larvae, juveniles, and adult)
- Scalloped hammerhead shark (juveniles)
- Tiger shark (larvae and juveniles)

On behalf of HRT, FHI requests that your office kindly forward us any information on federal rare, threatened, or endangered marine species information, managed fish species, or essential fish habitat that may exist within or adjacent to the project study corridor. We look forward to receiving any information you can provide us, and to future coordination with your office.

Very truly yours,

FITZGERALD & HALLIDAY, INC.

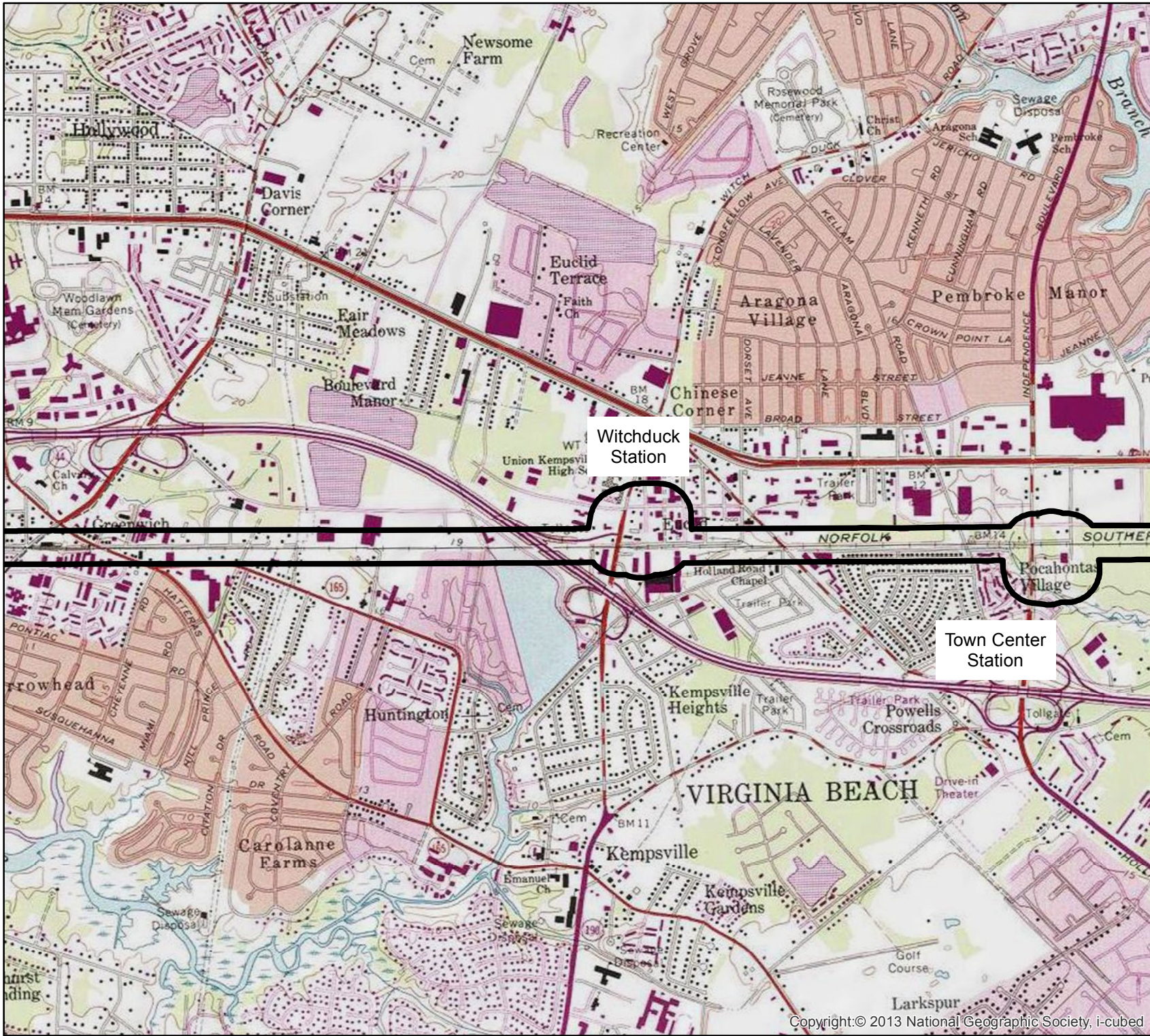


Stephanie Dyer-Carroll, AICP  
Senior Project Manager

Enclosure

cc: C. Tillery (FHI); E. Nelson (HDR); Julie Timm (HRT)

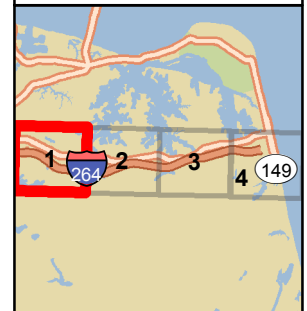
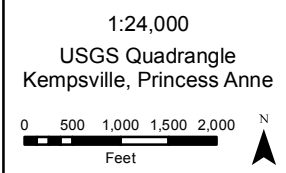




Virginia Beach  
Transit  
Extension Study

USGS Project  
Location  
Page 1 of 4

- USGS  
Quadrangle  
Boundary
- Project Area





Virginia Beach  
Transit  
Extension Study

USGS Project  
Location

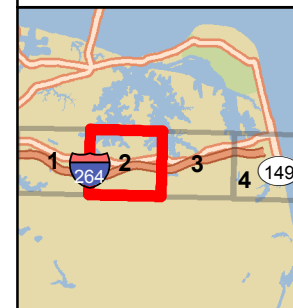
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Quadrangle  
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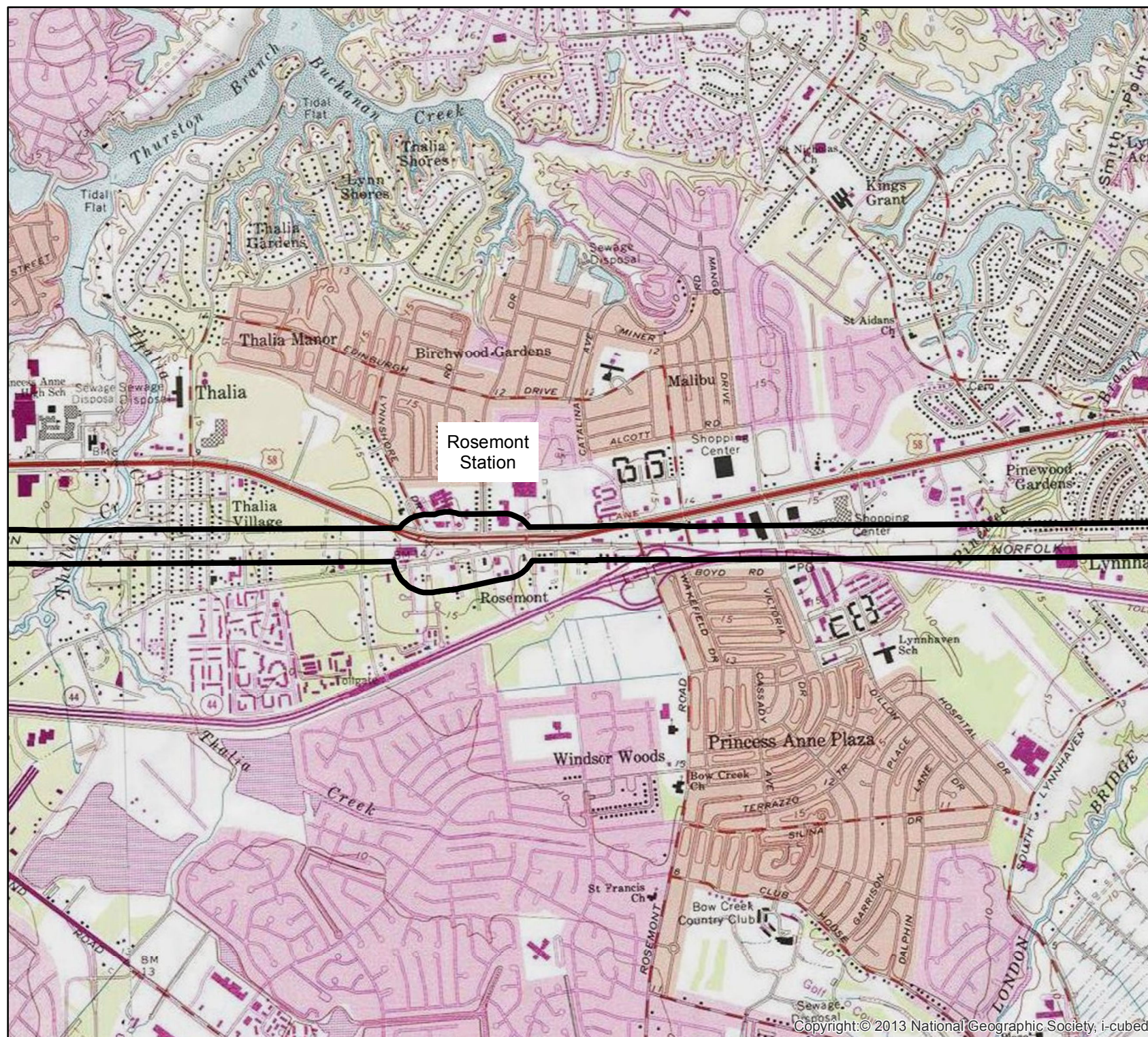
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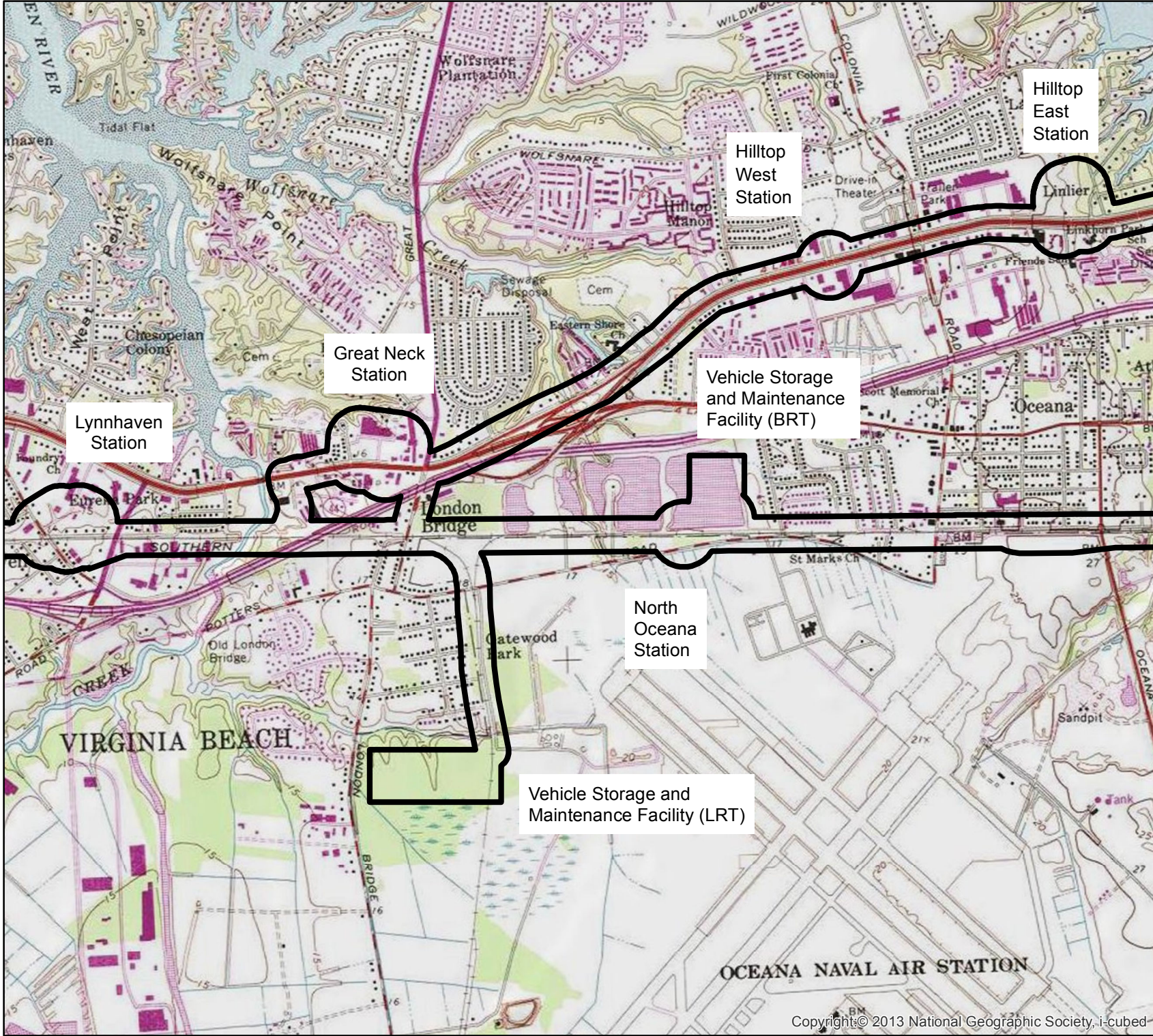


Original in Color - FHI - 4/11/2013



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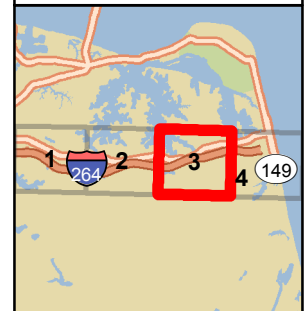
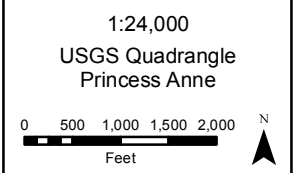
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Extension Study

USGS Project  
Location

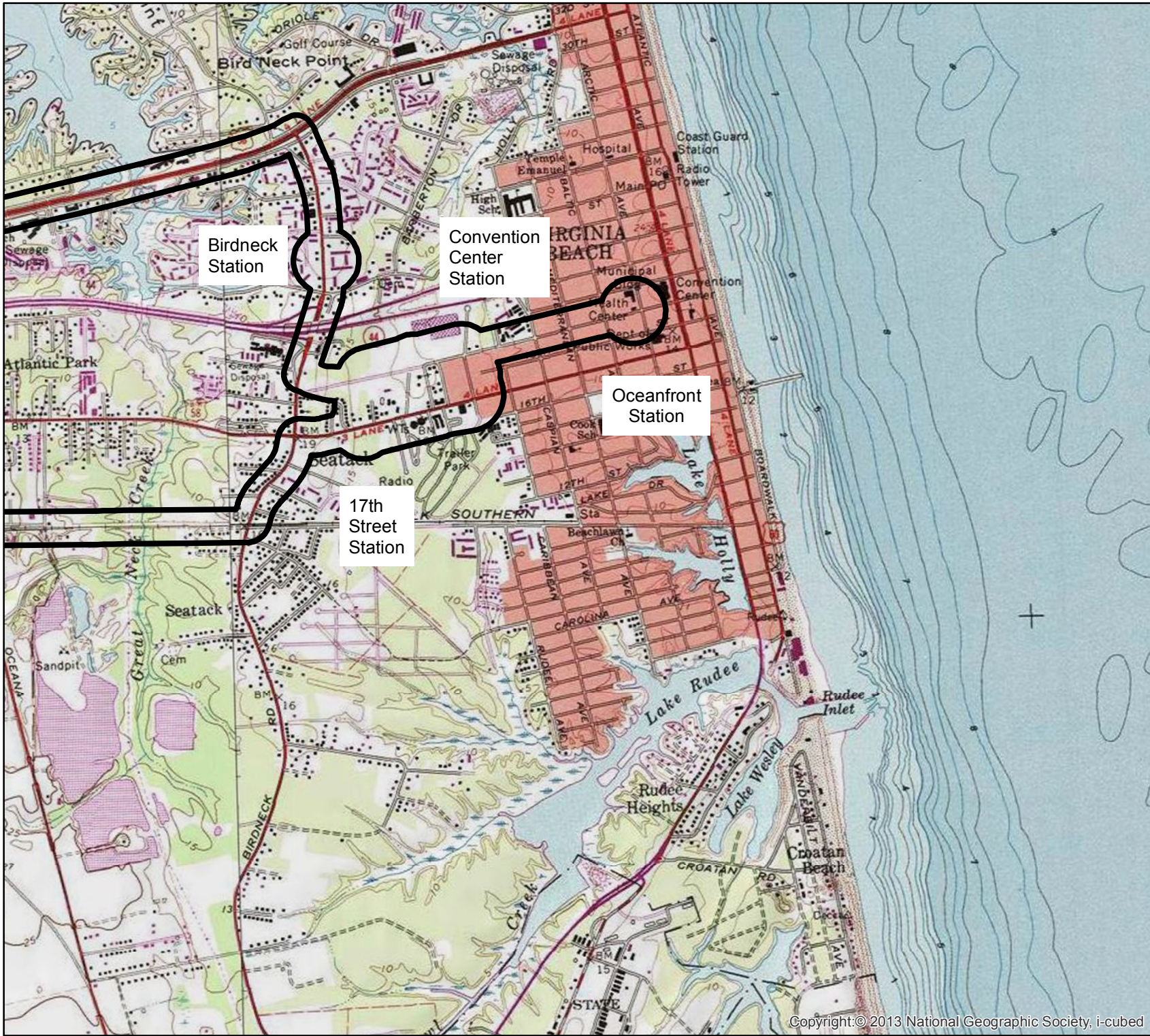
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USGS  
Quadrangle  
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Project Area







Virginia Beach  
Transit  
Extension Study

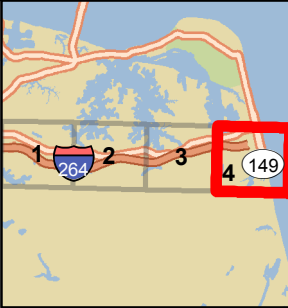
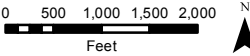
USGS Project  
Location

Page 4 of 4

USGS  
Quadrangle  
Boundary

Project Area

1:24,000  
USGS Quadrangle  
Princess Anne, Virginia Beach







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*Innovative Planning, Better Communities*

72 Cedar Street Hartford, CT 06106

Tel. (860) 247-7200

Fax (860) 247-7206

May 7, 2013

Mr. Matt Wicks  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Norfolk District Office  
ATTN: CENAO-WR-R  
803 Front Street  
Norfolk, VA 23510

Subject: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)  
Navigability of Water Crossings

Dear Mr. Wicks,

Under contract to HDR, Inc., Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. (FHI) is assisting Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) with the preparation of the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES) to examine the best transit options available for a former Norfolk Southern Railroad right-of-way in Virginia Beach. In December, David Laiuppa with our office spoke with you about seasonal limitations of wetland delineations. As you will recall, a wetland delineation was undertaken in the fall of 2009. Since that time, the Study has been modified to include a fixed-guideway alignment alternative through the Hilltop area along Laskin Road and station locations have been modified and refined.

The VBTES project involves assessing the environmental impact of various transit alternatives including bus, bus rapid transit, and light rail transit, along approximately 10.8 miles of the former Norfolk Southern Corporation's rail right-of-way in Virginia Beach and eastward to the Oceanfront at 19<sup>th</sup> Street. This inactive rail corridor extends from Newtown Road at the Norfolk-Virginia Beach City line eastward to Birdneck Road in a line roughly parallel to Interstate 264. The Oceanfront extension of the corridor starts at Birdneck Road and stretches along 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Washington Street to 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Arctic. An alternative fixed-guideway alignment to the Oceanfront is also being studied through the Hilltop area along Laskin Road, and two potential locations for a vehicle storage and maintenance facility are also under study. The study corridor is depicted on the attached four map sheets derived from the Kempsville, VA, Princess Anne, VA, and Virginia Beach, VA USGS Topographic Quadrangle Maps. With the exception of several proposed station locations (which are depicted by the "bulb-outs" on the attached map sheets), the study corridor being evaluated is roughly 500 feet wide.



One component of our analysis is the investigation and documentation of existing navigable waterways in the project study corridor. We are hoping that you can direct us to someone in your office that can provide us with mapping that depicts navigation channels in the project corridor. In addition to contacting you, we have sent a similar request letter on to Mr. Terrence Knowles of the U.S. Coast Guard.

We sincerely appreciate your assistance with this.

Very truly yours,

FITZGERALD & HALLIDAY, INC.

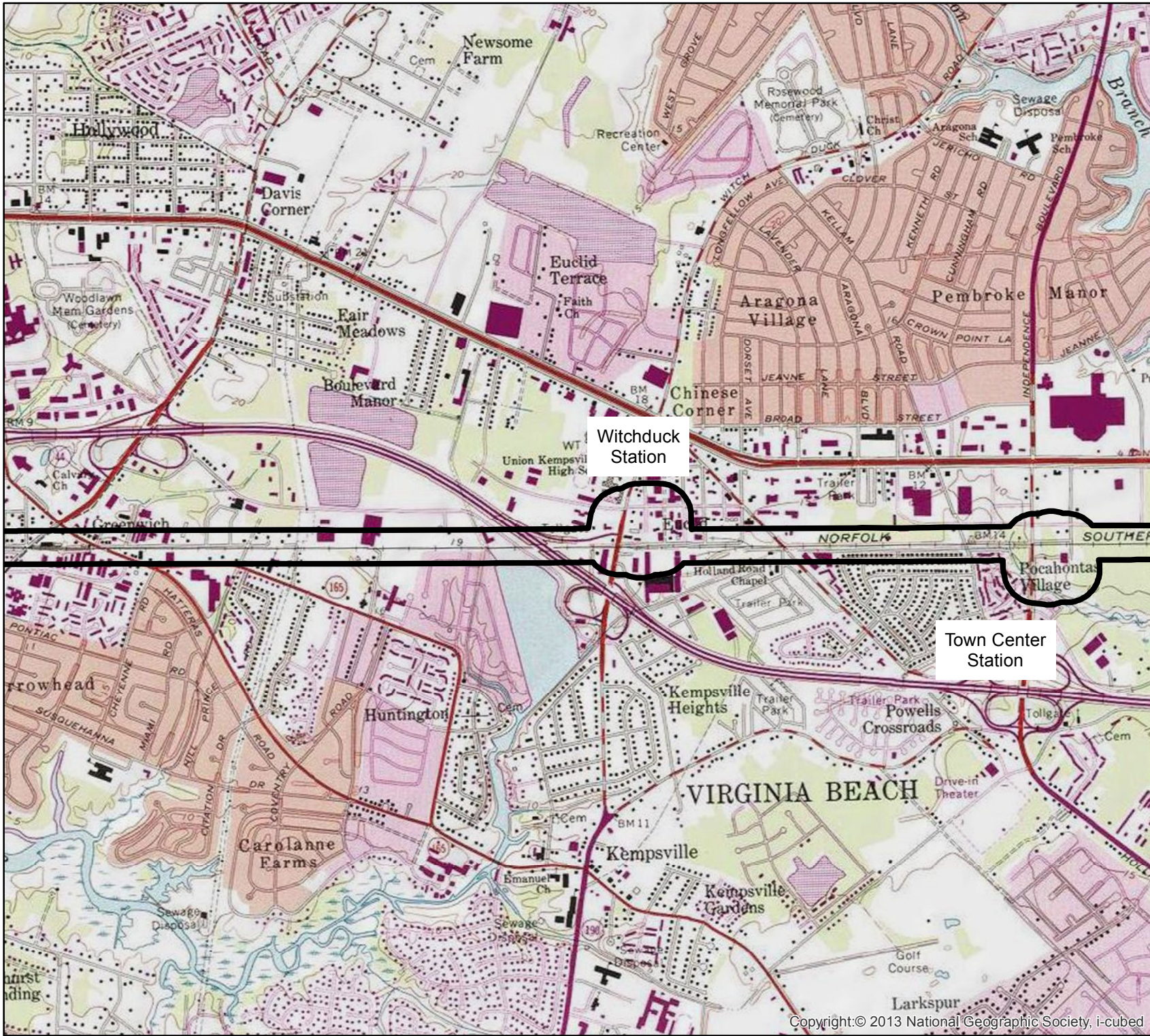
A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Stephanie Dyer-Carroll". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stephanie" and last name "Carroll" being more prominent than the middle name "Dyer".

Stephanie Dyer-Carroll, AICP  
Senior Project Manager

cc: C. Tillery (FHI); E. Nelson (HDR); J. Timm (HRT)

Enclosure





Virginia Beach  
Transit  
Extension Study

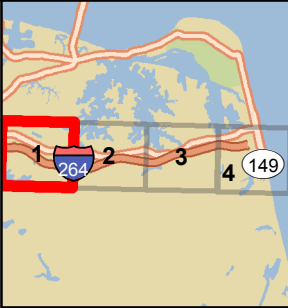
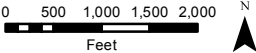
USGS Project  
Location

Page 1 of 4

USGS  
Quadrangle  
Boundary

Project Area

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USGS Quadrangle  
Kempsville, Princess Anne



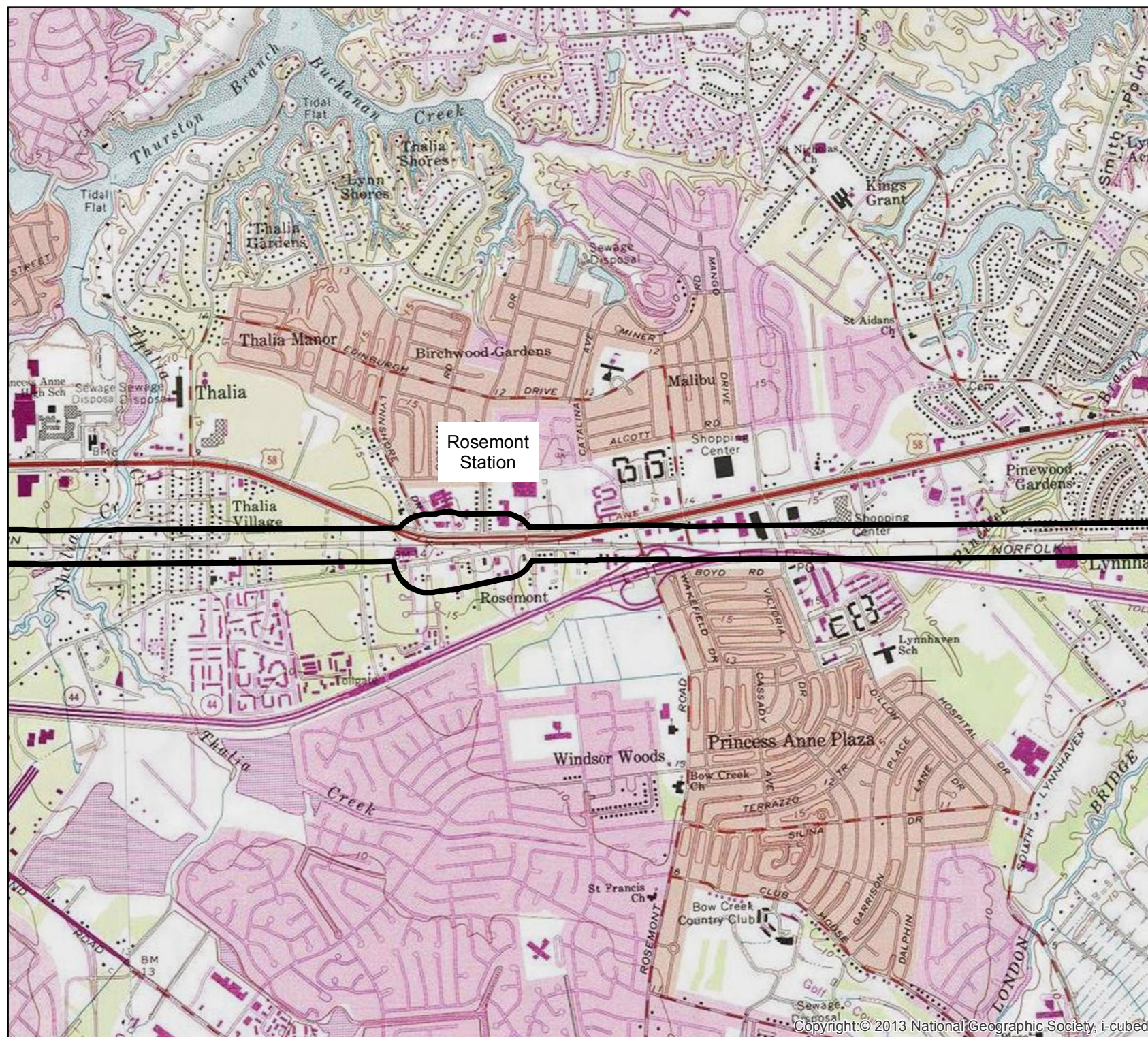
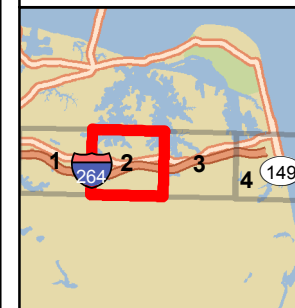
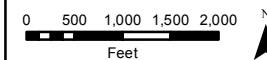


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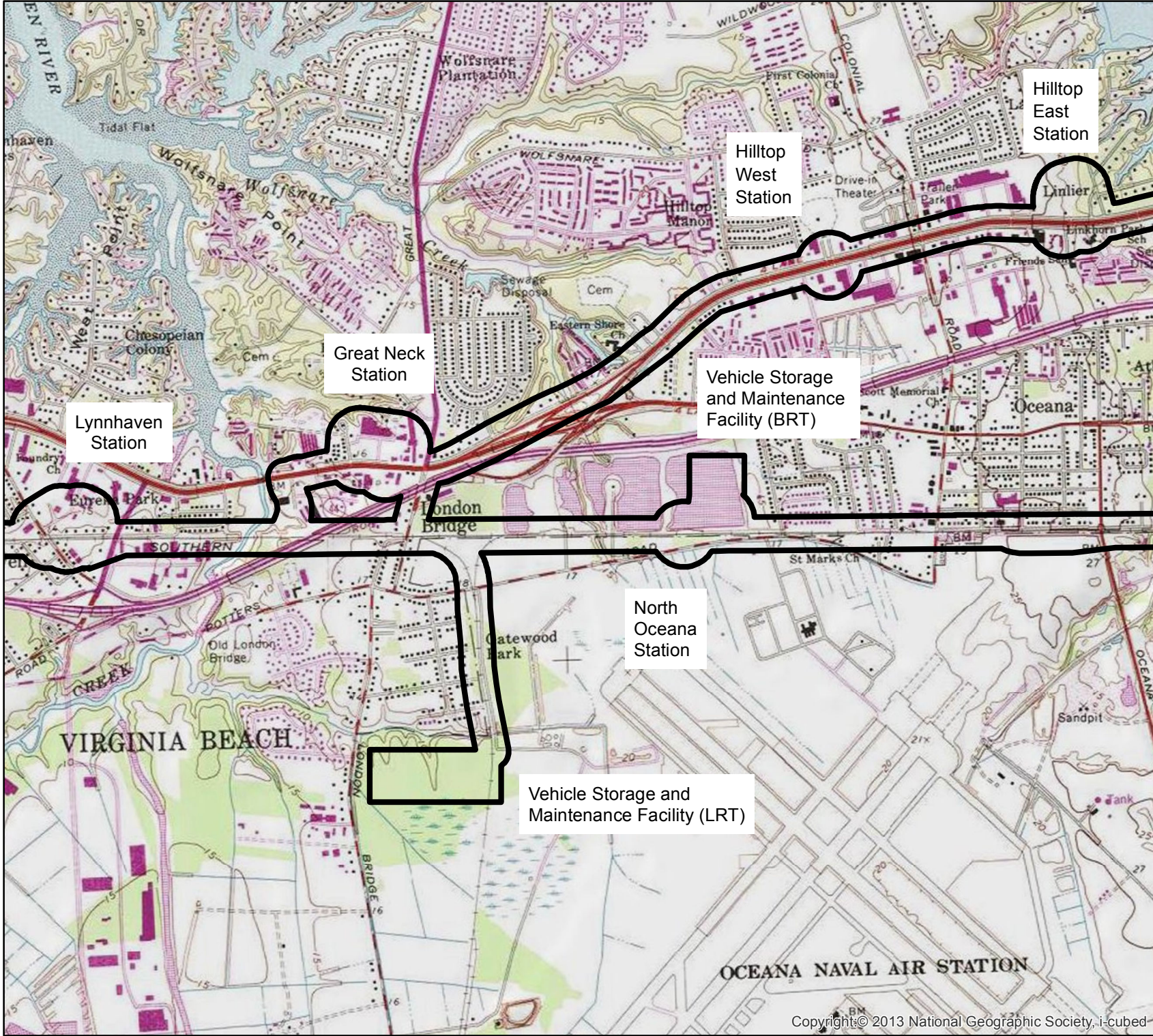
Project Area

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USGS Quadrangle  
Princess Anne







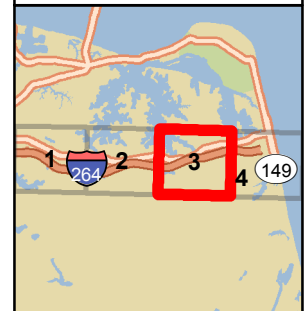
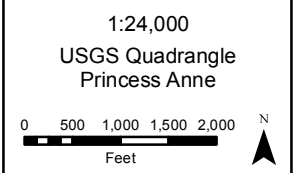
Virginia Beach  
Transit  
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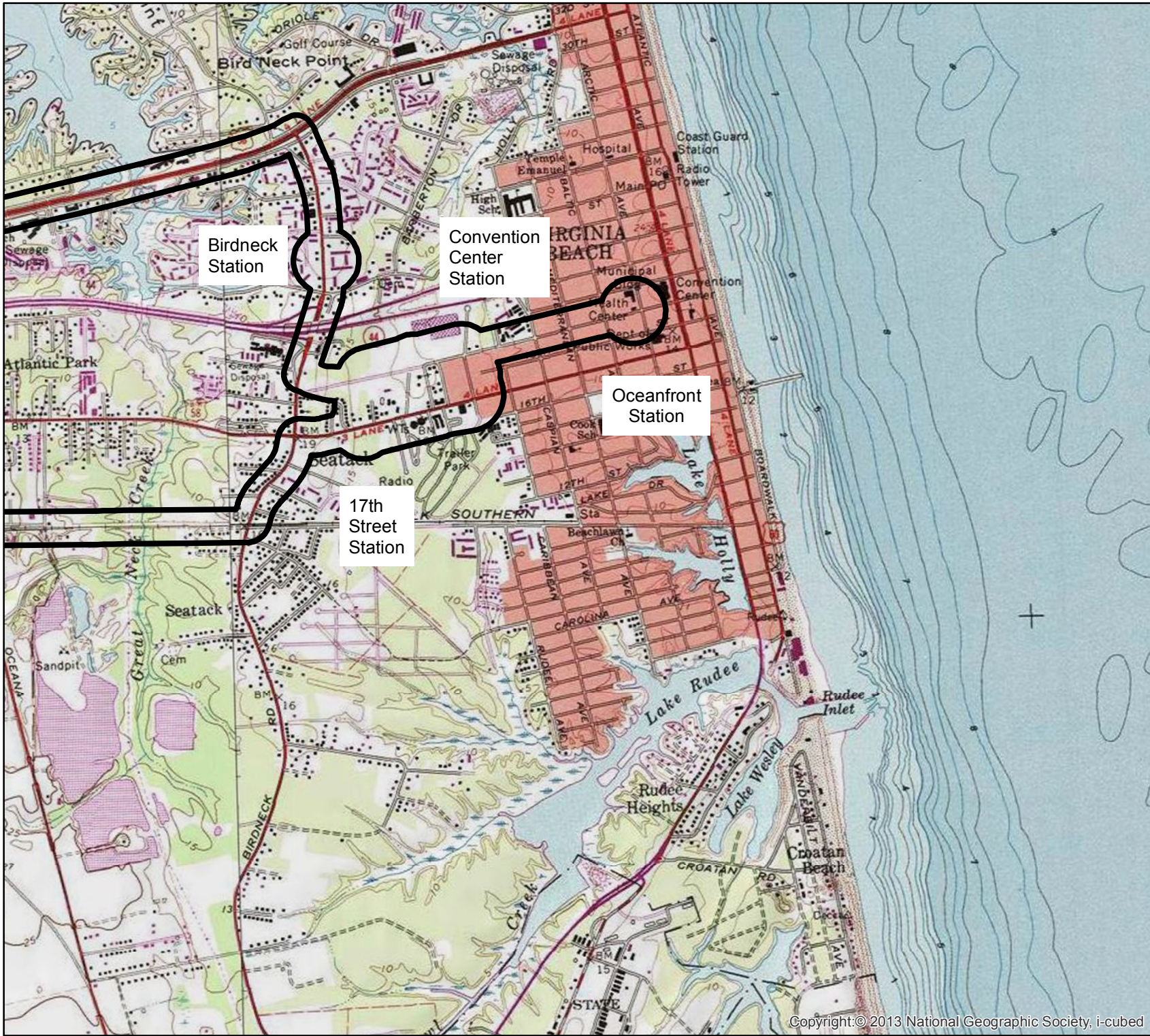
Page 3 of 4

USGS  
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Project Area







Virginia Beach  
Transit  
Extension Study

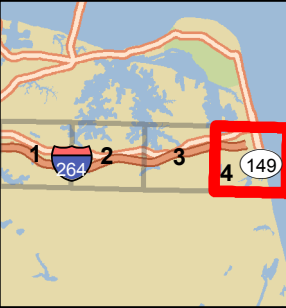
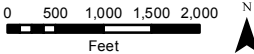
USGS Project  
Location

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USGS  
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Boundary

Project Area

1:24,000  
USGS Quadrangle  
Princess Anne, Virginia Beach







FITZGERALD & HALLIDAY, INC.

*Innovative Planning, Better Communities*

72 Cedar Street Hartford, CT 06106

Tel. (860) 247-7200

Fax (860) 247-7206

May 7, 2013

Mr. Terrance Knowles  
Environmental Protection Specialist  
United States Coast Guard Fifth District  
431 Crawford Street  
Portsmouth, VA 23704-5004

Subject: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

Dear Mr. Knowles,

Under contract to HDR Engineering, Inc., Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. (FHI) is assisting Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) with the preparation of the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES) to examine the best transit options available for a former Norfolk Southern Railroad right-of-way in Virginia Beach. Our initial inquiry relative to the navigability of water crossings within the project corridor was submitted to your office in December 2009. Since this time, options have been added for the fixed-guideway alignment in the Hilltop area along Laskin Road and station locations have been refined. Thus, FHI seeks to re-initiate our coordination efforts with your office and kindly requests any information including a statement of your concerns, if any, relative to potential impacts from the project on navigable water crossings. Any information provided will be utilized in the preparation of Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the project.

The VBTES project involves assessing the environmental impact of various transit alternatives including bus, bus rapid transit, and light rail transit, along approximately 10.8 miles of the former Norfolk Southern Corporation's rail right-of-way in Virginia Beach and eastward to the Oceanfront at 19<sup>th</sup> Street. This inactive rail corridor extends from Newtown Road at the Norfolk-Virginia Beach City line eastward to Birdneck Road in a line roughly parallel to Interstate 264. The Oceanfront extension of the corridor starts at Birdneck Road and stretches along 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Washington Street to 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Arctic. An alternative fixed-guideway alignment to the Oceanfront is also being studied through the Hilltop area along Laskin Road, and two potential locations for a vehicle storage and maintenance facility are also under study. The study corridor is depicted on the attached four map sheets derived from the Kempsville, VA, Princess Anne, VA, and Virginia Beach, VA USGS Topographic Quadrangle Maps. With the exception of several proposed station locations (which are depicted by the "bulb-outs" on the attached map sheets), the study corridor being evaluated is roughly 500 feet wide.

In 2009, we conducted fieldwork from Newtown Road in Norfolk, VA east to Birdneck Road in Virginia Beach, VA to visually inspect all of the major water crossings along the project corridor. The results of our investigation are briefly summarized in the paragraphs below. In support of our effort, we kindly ask that you review this information and provide us with any information or mapping you may have regarding navigable waterways in the project corridor. We also request that you render a determination

*Planning Consultants*



as to the current navigability of the crossings discussed below and inform us if any U.S. Coast Guard permits or other requirements will apply at these locations so that we may document those requirements in the DEIS.

### **Thalia Creek Crossing**

The proposed project corridor, which follows the path of the Norfolk Southern rail corridor, crosses Thalia Creek just east of Town Center. The existing railroad bridge over the creek is a wooden structure with timber cross planks blocking all of the openings between the piers except for one (refer to Photo 1 attached). Due to the limited clearance under the timber cross planks and narrow width of the lone opening between piers (approximately eight feet), it appears that only kayaks and canoes can successfully pass under the bridge. Additionally, a review of Google Earth (2009) aerial photos revealed that there are no docks or other signs of boating activity downstream (south of the existing railroad bridge). Upstream vertical clearance is controlled by the fixed bridge at Virginia Beach Boulevard. To the north of the railroad bridge, the first dock is encountered approximately 0.7 miles upstream of the crossing on the east side of the creek, opposite the athletic fields associated with Princess Anne High School. As one proceeds further to the north along the creek and into Hebden Cove and Witchduck Bay, docks and boating activity steadily increase.

### **London Bridge Creek**

The Norfolk Southern rail corridor crosses London Bridge Creek just to the northeast of the I-264 Lynnhaven Parkway interchange. Like the Thalia Creek crossing, the bridge includes timber cross planks that cover many of the openings between the piers (refer to Photo 2 attached). It appears that the limited clearance under the timber cross planks and the narrow width of the unobstructed openings between piers (approximately eight feet) may only be suitable for the passage of kayaks and canoes. A review of Google Earth (2009) aerial photography did reveal the presence of a single residential dock located approximately 0.6 miles downstream (to the south) of the existing railroad bridge. No other docks or signs of active boating were noted along downstream reaches of the creek. Approximately 0.2 miles upstream of the railroad bridge, docks begin to appear just north of the Virginia Beach Boulevard bridge and steadily increase in frequency as one heads north along the creek towards Lynnhaven Bay.

### **Great Neck Creek**

Another major crossing of a creek by the project corridor is over Great Neck Creek just to the northeast of the Oceana Naval Base. The creek actually flows under the railroad corridor via a large culvert and the channel just north and south of the culvert is narrow and densely vegetated (refer to Photo 3 attached). There are several other smaller creeks and waterways crossed by the existing rail corridor but like Great Neck Creek, all flow through culverts of various sizes under the railroad bed. None of these appear to be navigable in the vicinity of the project corridor.

### **Linkhorn Bay**

Due to the addition of the Hilltop alignment alternative on Laskin Road, an additional crossing is being added to the DEIS at Upper Linkhorn Bay. At this time, a field survey has not been completed for this crossing. Field survey work is anticipated to be performed later this month.

In addition to reaching out to the U.S. Coast Guard for information, we will also consult with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to request any mapping they may have that depicts navigable waterways in the project study corridor. We sincerely appreciate your assistance and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Very truly yours,

FITZGERALD & HALLIDAY, INC.



Stephanie Dyer-Carroll, AICP  
Senior Project Manager

cc: C. Tillery (FHI); E. Nelson (HDR); J. Timm (HRT)

Enclosure

**Photos of Major Creek Crossings in the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study Corridor**



*Photo 1: View of upstream face of the Norfolk Southern Railroad Bridge over Thalia Creek. Note that timber cross planks block passage through openings except in one location. That opening is roughly eight feet in width.*



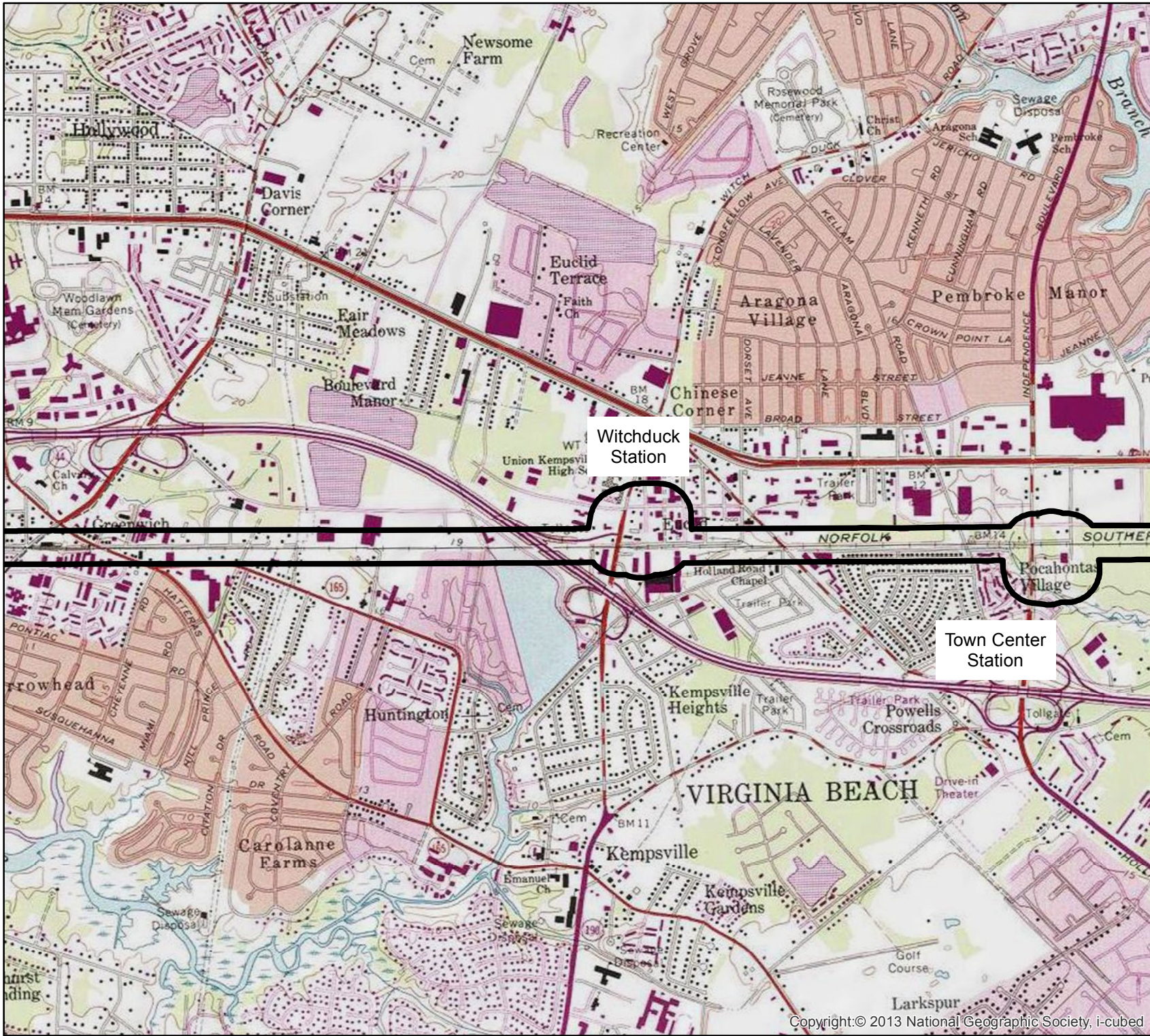


*Photo 2: View of upstream face of the Norfolk Southern Railroad Bridge over London Bridge Creek. Note that timber cross planks block passage through several of the openings between the piers. Unobstructed openings are roughly eight feet in width.*



*Photo 3: View of vegetated narrow channel at Great Neck Creek proximate to the existing rail corridor.*





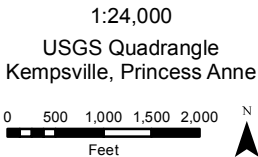
Virginia Beach  
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USGS  
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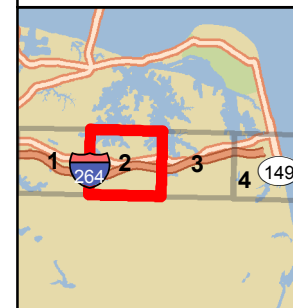
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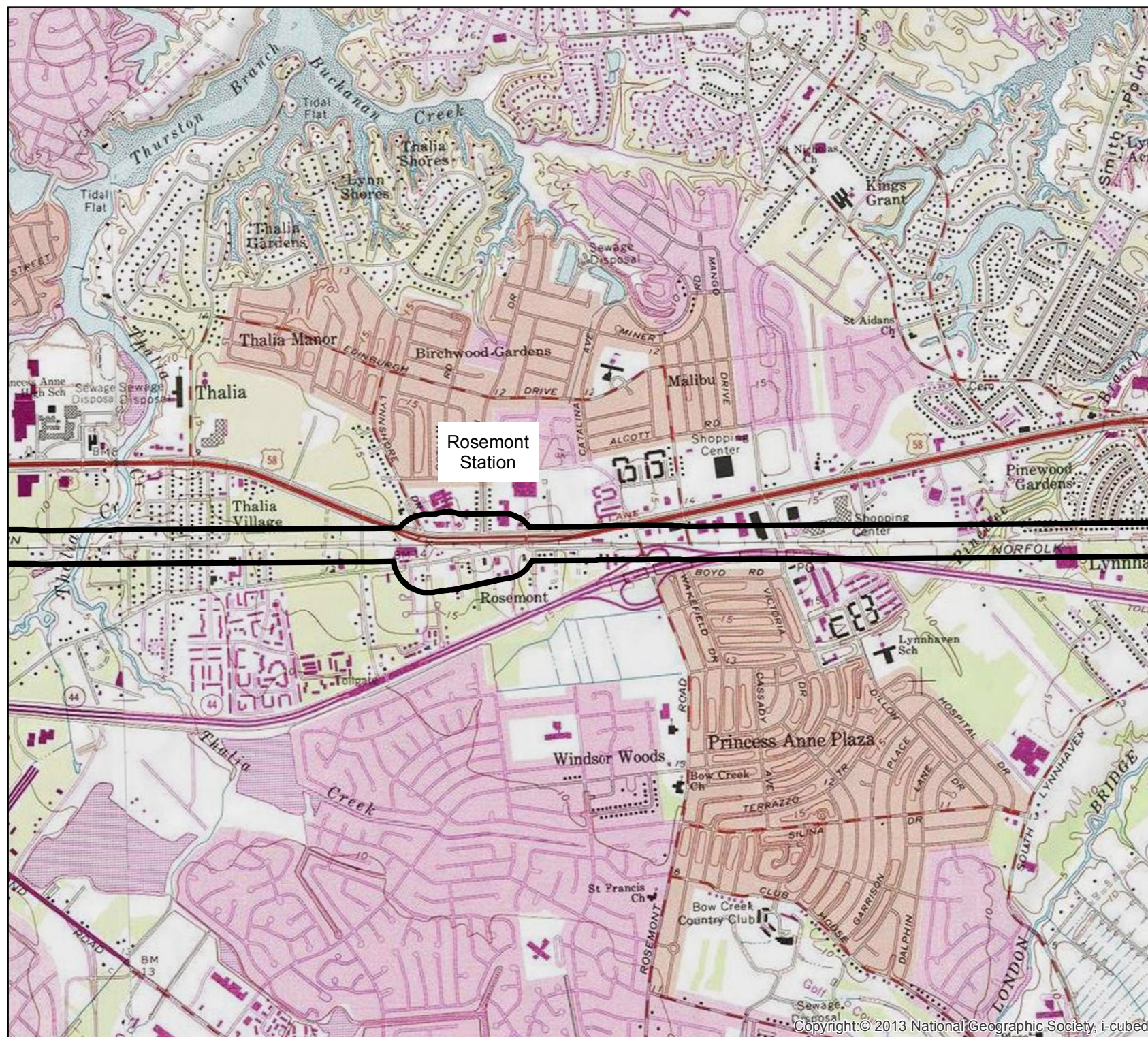
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USGS Quadrangle  
Princess Anne

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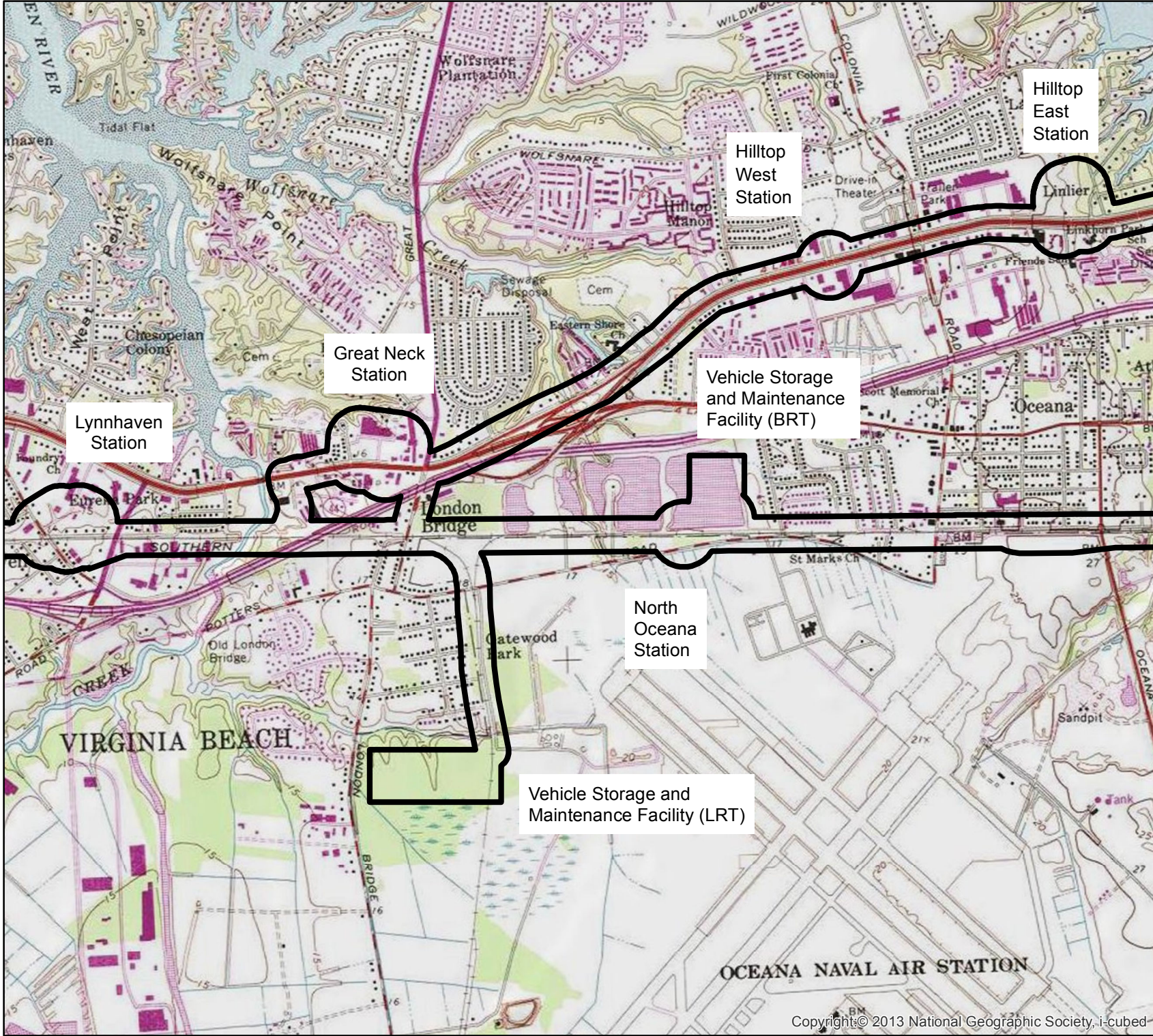


Original in Color - FHI - 4/11/2013



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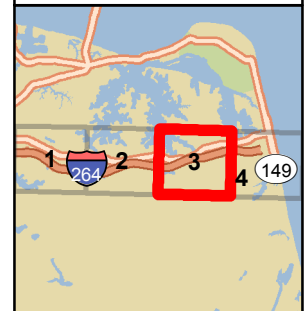
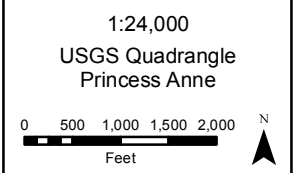
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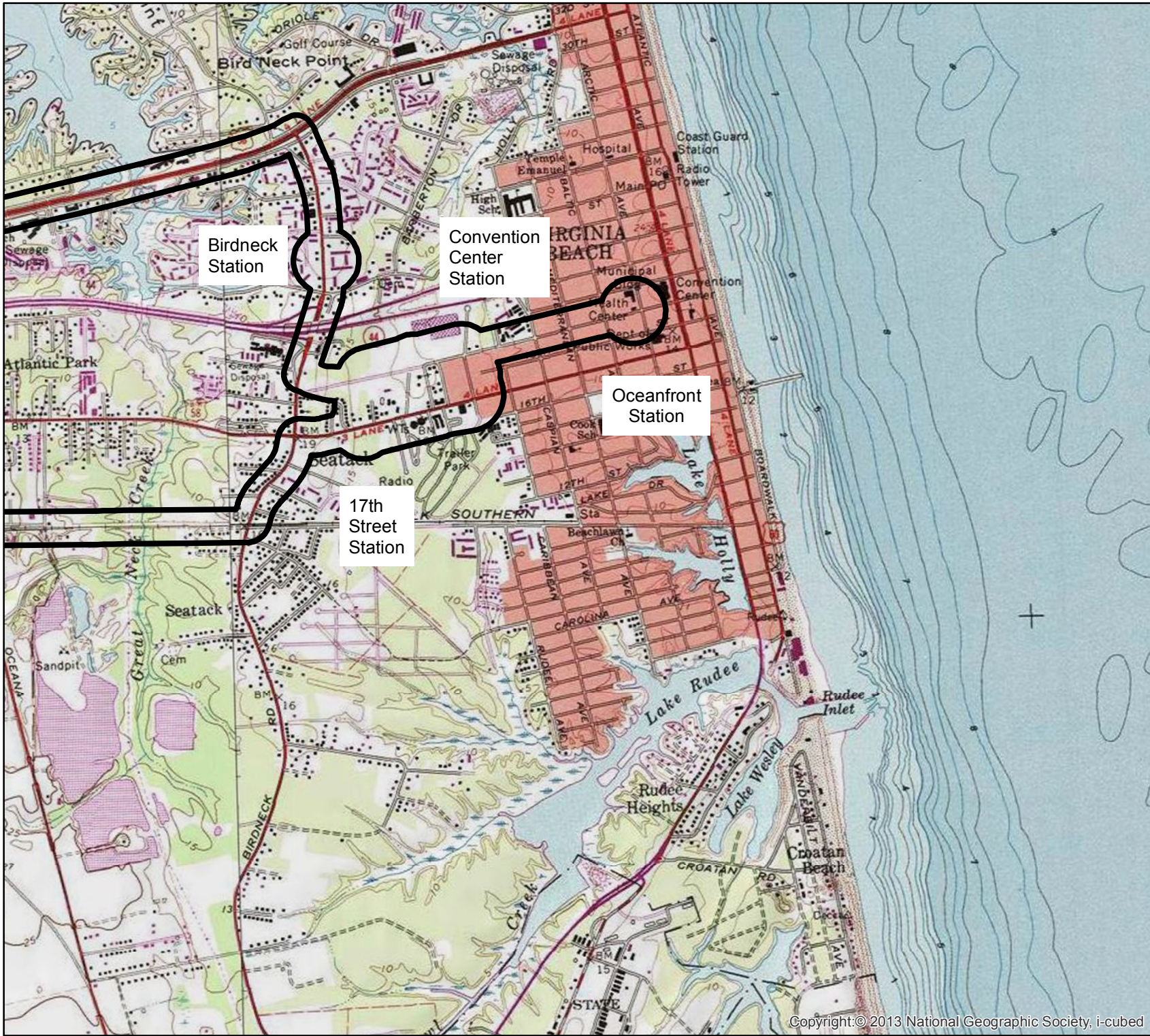
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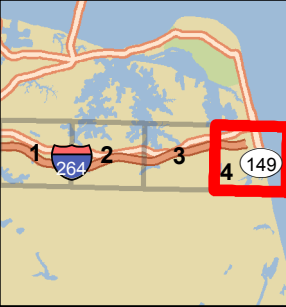
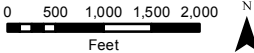
USGS Project  
Location

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USGS  
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Boundary

Project Area

1:24,000  
USGS Quadrangle  
Princess Anne, Virginia Beach







May 7, 2013

Ms. Cindy Schulz  
United States Fish & Wildlife Service  
6669 Short Lane  
Gloucester, VA 23061

Subject: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

Dear Ms. Schulz:

Under contract to HDR, Inc., Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. (FHI) is assisting Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) with the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES). Our initial inquiry relative to federal endangered and/or threatened species and critical habitats within the project corridor was submitted to your office in December 2009. Your office responded in March 2010, indicating that no impacts were anticipated to federal endangered and/or threatened species and critical habitats. Since this time, options have been added for the fixed-route alignment in the Hilltop area along Laskin Road and station locations have been refined. At this time FHI seeks to re-initiate our coordination efforts with your office and kindly requests any information including a statement of your concerns, if any, relative to potential impacts from the project relative to federal endangered and/or threatened species and critical habitats. Any information provided will be utilized in the preparation of the DEIS for the project.

The VBTES project involves assessing the environmental impact of various transit alternatives including bus, bus rapid transit, and light rail transit along approximately 10.8 miles of the former Norfolk Southern Corporation's rail right-of-way in Virginia Beach and eastward to the Oceanfront at 19<sup>th</sup> Street. This inactive rail corridor extends from Newtown Road at the Norfolk-Virginia Beach City line eastward to Birdneck Road in a line roughly parallel to Interstate 264. The Oceanfront extension of the corridor starts at Birdneck Road and stretches along 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Washington Street to 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Arctic. An alternative fixed-guideway alignment to the Oceanfront is also being studied through the Hilltop area along Laskin Road, and two potential locations for a vehicle storage and maintenance facility are also under study. The study corridor is depicted on the attached four map sheets derived from the Kempsville, VA, Princess Anne, VA, and Virginia Beach, VA USGS Topographic Quadrangle Maps. With the exception of several proposed station locations (which are depicted by the "bulb-outs" on the attached map sheets), the study corridor being evaluated is roughly 500 feet wide.

The study area is largely the same as depicted in map sheets provided to you with our December 2009 correspondence. The main changes are the elimination of some of the initial station locations and addition of others, as well as the Hilltop area alternative alignment west of Birdneck Road along the Laskin Road corridor.

Using the Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries BOVA online database, we have generated a list of federal and state endangered and/or threatened species within a 10-mile radius around Virginia Beach. This list is enclosed for your reference. We respectfully request your professional opinion on any anticipated impacts to these species from the proposed project.

We look forward to receiving any information you can provide us, and to future coordination with your office.

Very truly yours,

FITZGERALD & HALLIDAY, INC.



Stephanie Dyer-Carroll, AICP  
Senior Project Manager

Enclosure

cc: C. Tillery (FHI); E. Nelson (HDR); J. Timm (HRT)



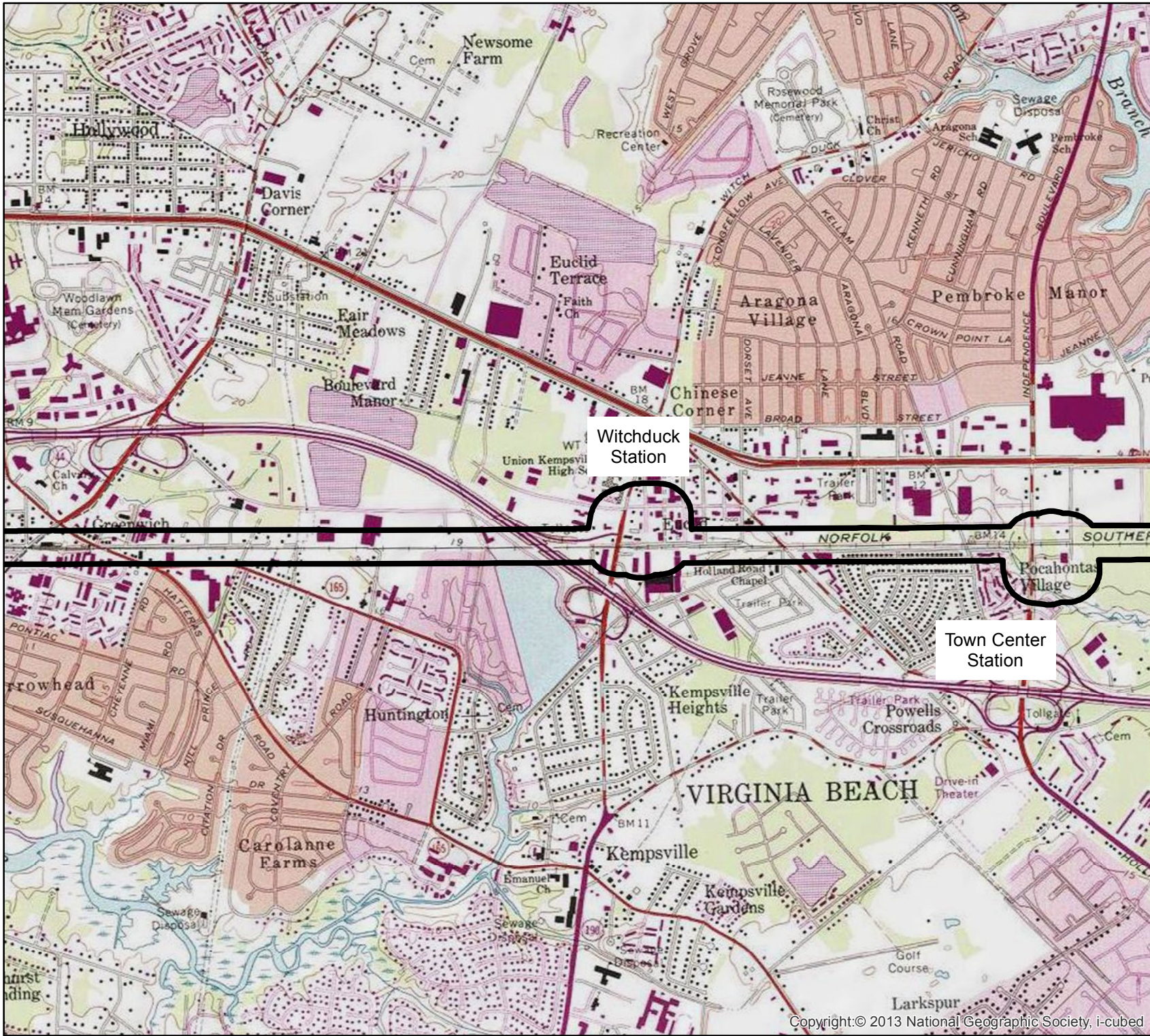
## Federal and State Threatened and Endangered Species within 10 miles of Virginia Beach

BOVA Code	Status*	Tier	Common Name	Scientific Name
030071	FTST	I	<a href="#">Turtle, loggerhead sea</a>	Caretta caretta
040120	FTST	I	<a href="#">Plover, piping</a>	Charadrius melodus
030064	SE	I	<a href="#">Turtle, eastern chicken</a>	Deirochelys reticularia reticularia
040118	SE	I	<a href="#">Plover, Wilson's</a>	Charadrius wilsonia
040110	SE	I	<a href="#">Rail, black</a>	Laterallus jamaicensis
050034	SE	I	<a href="#">Bat, Rafinesque's eastern big-eared</a>	Corynorhinus rafinesquii macrotis
040096	ST	I	<a href="#">Falcon, peregrine</a>	Falco peregrinus
040129	ST	I	<a href="#">Sandpiper, upland</a>	Bartramia longicauda
040293	ST	I	<a href="#">Shrike, loggerhead</a>	Lanius ludovicianus
040379	ST	I	<a href="#">Sparrow, Henslow's</a>	Ammodramus henslowii
040179	ST	I	<a href="#">Tern, gull-billed</a>	Sterna nilotica
010032	FESE	II	<a href="#">Sturgeon, Atlantic</a>	Acipenser oxyrinchus
030013	SE	II	<a href="#">Rattlesnake, canebrake</a>	Crotalus horridus
040183	FESE	IV	<a href="#">Tern, roseate</a>	Sterna dougallii dougallii
050008	ST	IV	<a href="#">Shrew, Dismal Swamp southeastern</a>	Sorex longirostris fisheri
030073	FESE		<a href="#">Turtle, hawksbill sea</a>	Eretmochelys imbricata
030074	FESE		<a href="#">Turtle, Kemp's ridley sea</a>	Lepidochelys kempii
030075	FESE		<a href="#">Turtle, leatherback sea</a>	Dermochelys coriacea
030072	FTST		<a href="#">Turtle, green sea</a>	Chelonia mydas
040403	ST		<a href="#">Falcon, Arctic peregrine</a>	Falco peregrinus tundrius
040292	ST		<a href="#">Shrike, migrant loggerhead</a>	Lanius ludovicianus migrans

\* FT = federal threatened, FE = federal endangered, ST = state threatened, SE = state endangered

Source: Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries BOVA online database, February 2013

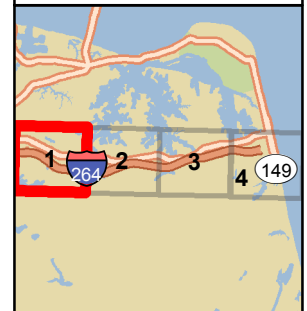
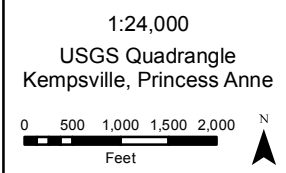




Virginia Beach  
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USGS Project  
Location  
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- USGS  
Quadrangle  
Boundary
- Project Area





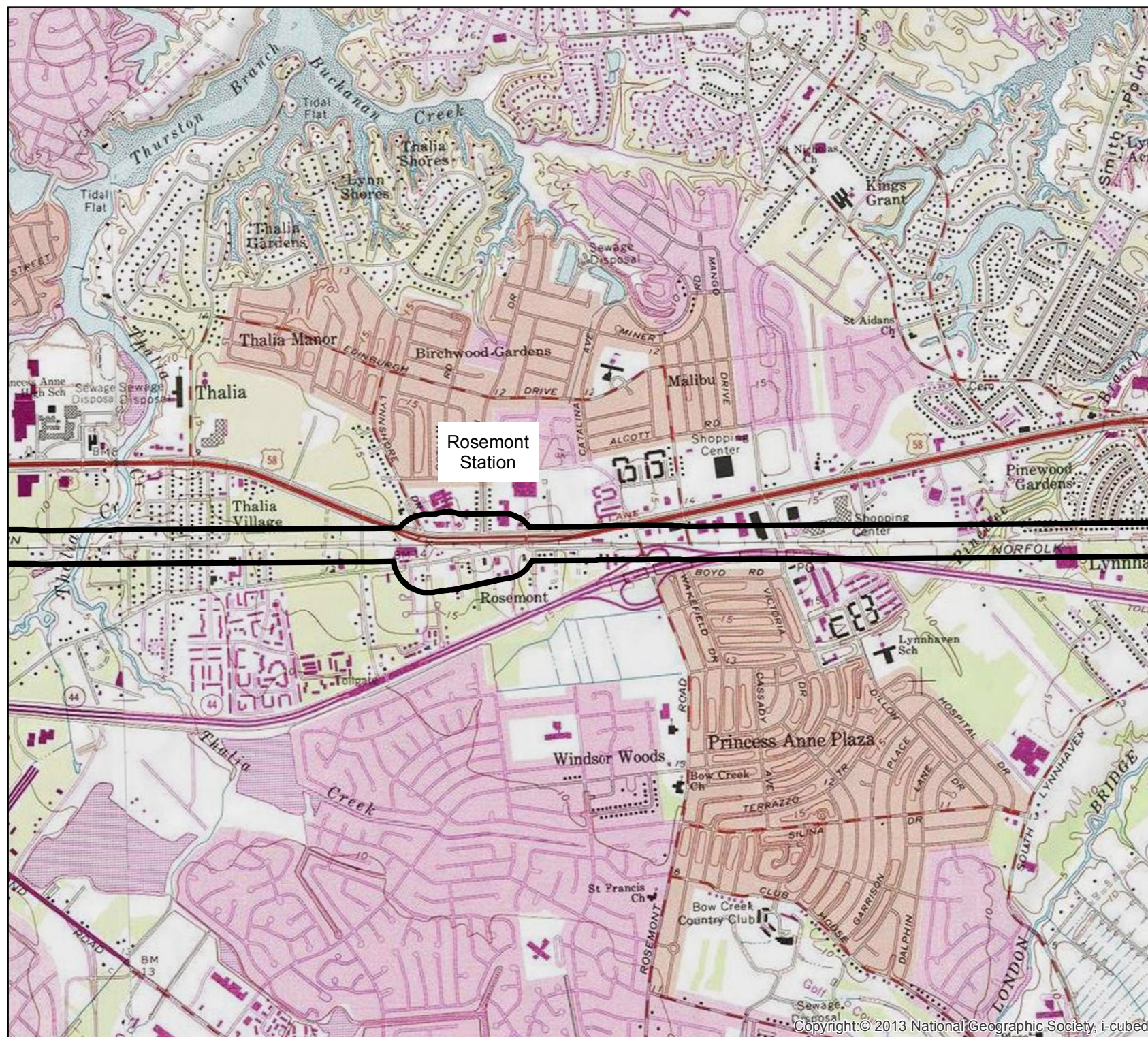
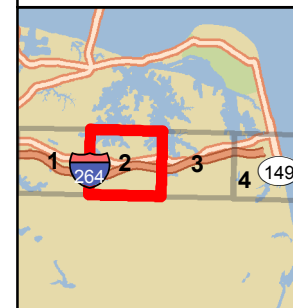
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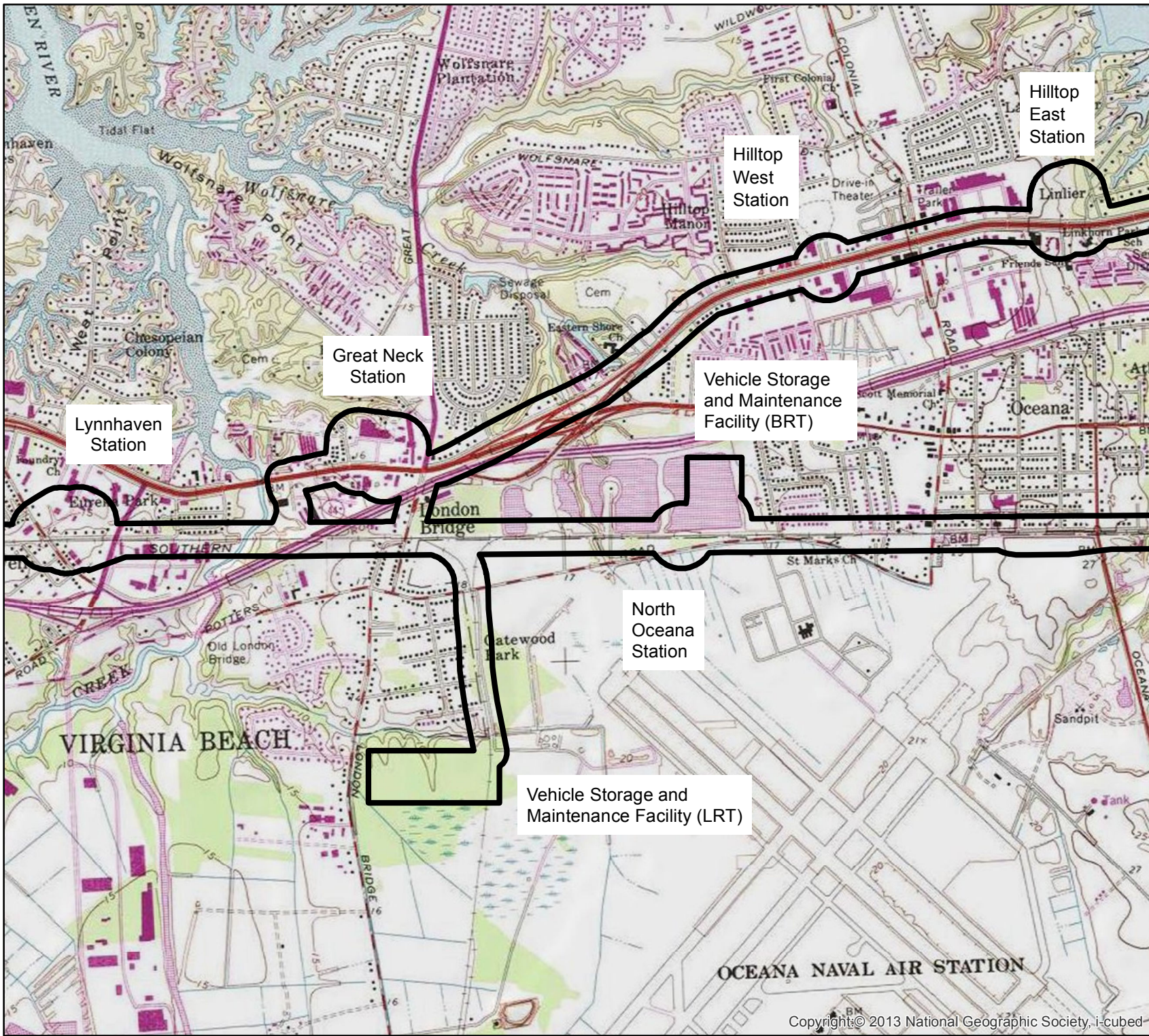
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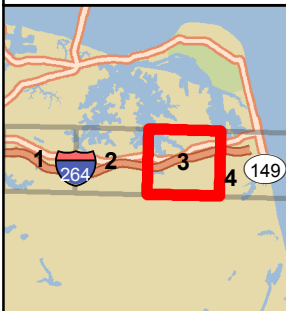
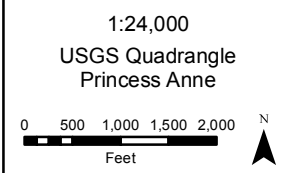




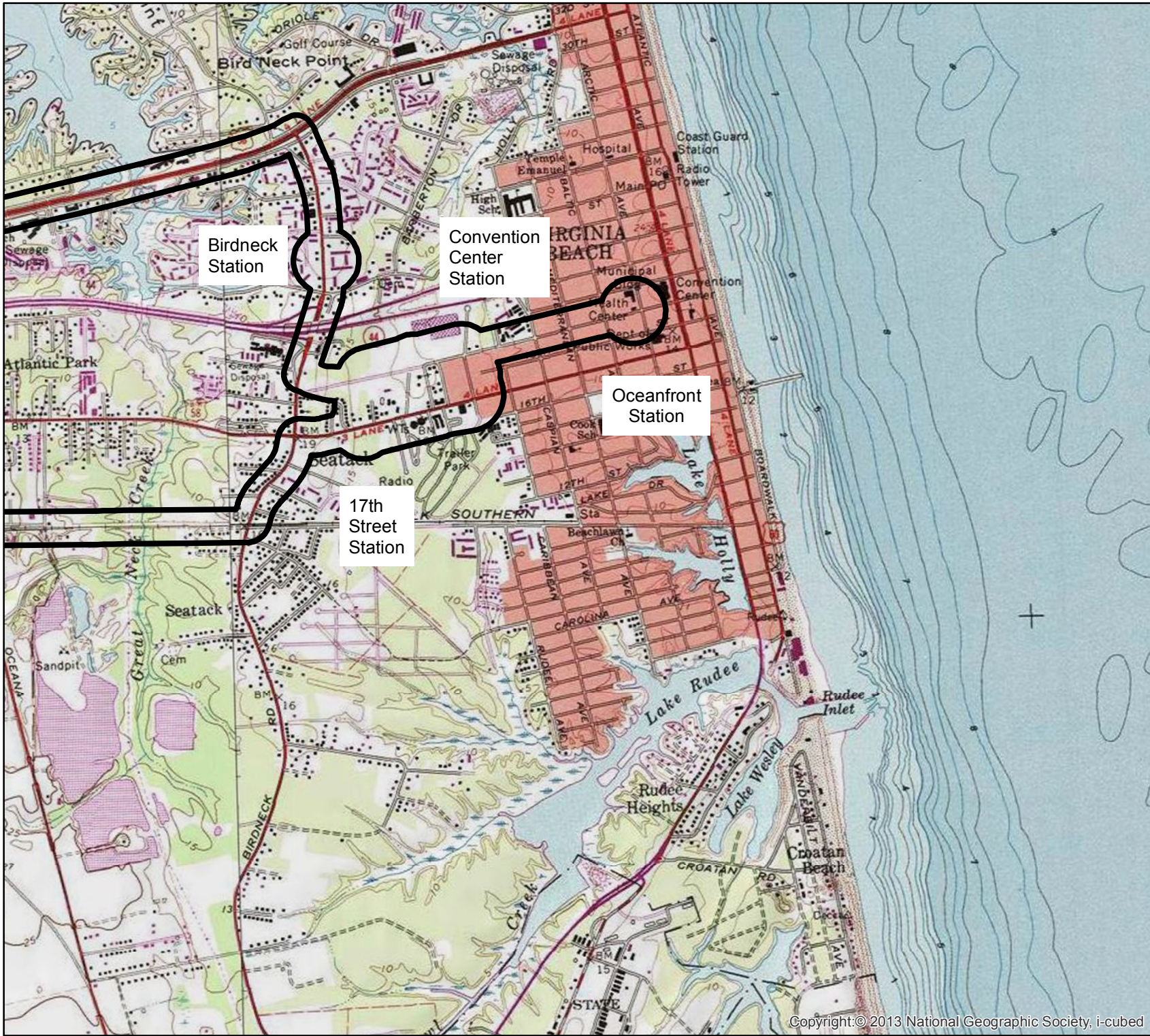
Virginia Beach  
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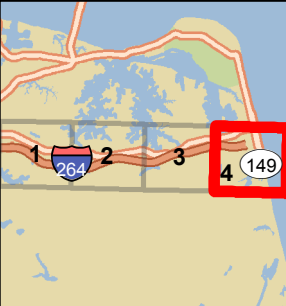
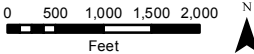
USGS Project  
Location

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USGS  
Quadrangle  
Boundary

Project Area

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USGS Quadrangle  
Princess Anne, Virginia Beach





**From:** [Julie Timm](#)  
**To:** [Nelson, Eric](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study DEIS Section 106 Initiation (FTA)  
**Date:** Thursday, June 06, 2013 11:58:41 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[VB Transit Extension Study DEIS Section 106 Initiation Ltr 06\\_06\\_13.pdf](#)  
[Attachment A - FTA letter to DHR 8.4.09.pdf](#)  
[Attachment B SHPO Project Vicinity Corridors Under Consideration.pdf](#)

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YAY!

Julie E. Timm, AICP, CEP  
Transit Development Officer  
Hampton Roads Transit  
509 East 18th Street, Building #4  
Norfolk, VA 23504  
(p) 757-222-6000 x6699  
(c) 757-771-0672  
[www.gohrt.com](http://www.gohrt.com)

---

**From:** ryan.long@dot.gov [mailto:ryan.long@dot.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 06, 2013 11:32 AM  
**To:** kathleen.kilpatrick@dhr.virginia.gov  
**Cc:** daniel.koenig@dot.gov; William E. Harrell; Ray Amoruso; Julie Timm; Michele.DeAngelis@dot.gov; vida.morkunas@dot.gov  
**Subject:** Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study DEIS Section 106 Initiation (FTA)

Dear Ms. Kilpatrick,

Hampton Roads Transit (HRT), in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), is studying the possible extension of fixed-guideway transit service in the City of Virginia Beach. The attached letter (hard copy to follow) serves as the official notification from FTA of the initiation of the Section 106 process for this project. Supporting documentation with this initiation letter includes previous correspondence with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (SHPO), as well as maps indicating the proposed project vicinity and corridors under consideration. A third supporting document, prepared by the project sponsor, contains a Phase IA Cultural Resources Reconnaissance Survey regarding historic resources. However, since this document is 48 MB, HRT will be able to provide you a download link for this file, if that is acceptable to you.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Thank you,

Ryan Long, AICP  
Community Planner  
Federal Transit Administration, Region III  
1760 Market Street, Suite 500  
Philadelphia, PA 19103



p: 215.656.7051  
f: 215.656.7260  
[ryan.long@dot.gov](mailto:ryan.long@dot.gov)



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U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Transit  
Administration**

JUN 6 2013

REGION III  
Delaware, District of  
Columbia, Maryland,  
Pennsylvania, Virginia,  
West Virginia

1760 Market Street  
Suite 500  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-4124  
215-656-7100  
215-656-7260 (fax)

Ms. Kathleen Kilpatrick  
DHR Director & State Historic Preservation Officer  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
2801 Kensington Avenue  
Richmond, VA 23221

**Re: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study DEIS Section 106 Initiation**

Dear Ms. Kilpatrick,

Hampton Roads Transit (HRT), with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as the lead Federal agency, is studying the proposed extension of transit service into the City of Virginia Beach, Virginia. The project will seek Federal funding for construction and operations. As such, FTA considers the project to be a Federal undertaking subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and associated implementing regulations 36 CFR Part 800. The project sponsor, HRT, previously corresponded with your office regarding this undertaking on August 4, 2009 (see **Attachment A**); however, this letter serves as the official notification from FTA for initiation of the Section 106 process.

The project currently being studied as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process is a proposed transit extension, connecting the existing light rail service at Newtown Road to the Virginia Beach Oceanfront. The proposed extension would run along the inactive National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligible Norfolk Southern Rail Line (purchased by the City of Virginia Beach in 2012). In addition to the alternatives using the former railroad property, other corridors are also under consideration to meet the project's goals and objectives. **Attachment B** shows the project vicinity and the corridors currently under consideration. The study is currently examining both light rail and bus rapid transit fixed-guideway options for the extension; however, the range of alternatives may change as the project is advanced.

The proposed project passes near several historic resources that are listed or eligible for listing in the NRHP. Various known or expected archaeological sites are also present in the study area. A reconnaissance level screening report was prepared in January of 2011 by Gray and Pape, Inc. prior to a temporary halt in the study's process between April 2011 and November 2012 (see **Attachment C**). FTA will work in consultation with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to develop an area of potential effects and list of consulting parties for this project.



Ms. Kathleen Kilpatrick

**Re: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study DEIS Section 106 Initiation**

Page 2

Thank you in advance for your assistance with this project. Please contact Mr. Ryan Long, Community Planner, at (215) 656-7051 or [ryan.long@dot.gov](mailto:ryan.long@dot.gov) with any questions. FTA and HRT will be contacting you shortly to update the Virginia Department of Historic Resources on the study process and to establish a work plan to complete the Section 106 process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brigid Hynes-Cherin", followed by a horizontal line.

Brigid Hynes-Cherin  
Regional Administrator

cc: Dan Koenig, FTA, Metro DC Office  
William Harrell, Hampton Roads Transit  
Ray Amoruso, Hampton Roads Transit  
Julie Timm, Hampton Roads Transit

Enclosures:

Attachment A - August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009 letter from HRT to DHR

Attachment B - Map of Alternatives Considered

Attachment C - Reconnaissance Level Screening Report (e-copy to be provided separately)



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
NORTHEAST REGION  
55 Great Republic Drive  
Gloucester, MA 01930-2276

JUN - 7 2013

Stephanie Dyer-Carroll  
Senior Project Manager  
Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.  
72 Cedar St  
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES) Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Ms. Dyer-Carroll,

Your letter, received on May 13, 2013, requested information about the presence of trust resources under the jurisdiction of NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in the vicinity of the VBTES project corridor in Virginia Beach, Virginia. The project proposes to cross a small number of tidally influenced waterways including Thalia Creek, London Bridge Creek, Great Neck Creek, and Upper Linkhorn Bay. We offer the following comments on the presence of Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species and essential fish habitat (EFH) in the area of interest about which you have inquired.

#### ESA Listed Species in the Action Area

The following ESA listed species and distinct population segments (DPS) under our jurisdiction are known to occur in coastal ocean and bay waters near Virginia Beach, Virginia:

Common name	Scientific name	ESA Status
Loggerhead sea turtle - NWA DPS <sup>1</sup>	<i>Caretta caretta</i>	Threatened
Leatherback sea turtle	<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	Endangered
Kemp's ridley sea turtle	<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>	Endangered
Green sea turtle	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	Endangered <sup>2</sup>
Atlantic sturgeon	<i>Acipenser oxyrinchus oxyrinchus</i>	
Gulf of Maine DPS		Threatened
New York Bight DPS		Endangered
Chesapeake Bay DPS		Endangered
Carolina DPS		Endangered
South Atlantic DPS		Endangered

<sup>1</sup> NWA DPS = Northwest Atlantic distinct population segment, the only loggerhead DPS present in the project area

<sup>2</sup> Green sea turtles in U.S. waters are listed as threatened except for the Florida breeding population, which is listed as endangered. Due to the inability to distinguish between these populations away from the nesting beach, green sea turtles are considered endangered wherever they occur in U.S. waters.





### *Sea turtles*

Sea turtles are known to occur seasonally in coastal waters of the Mid-Atlantic and may move into estuarine areas, such as Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries, to forage. The endangered leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*), green (*Chelonia mydas*), and Kemp's ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*) sea turtles, and the threatened NWA DPS of loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*) are known to be seasonally present in ocean waters off Virginia. Listed sea turtles are likely to be present in these waters from April 1 to November 30 of any given year, are generally found in waters between 16-64 feet in depth, and often prefer sheltered bays with slow currents.

Loggerheads are by far the most common sea turtles found in Virginia's coastal waters.

Excluding the mainstem Chesapeake Bay, sea turtles are much more common in Atlantic Ocean waters off Virginia than they are in its coastal bays and tidal creeks. As a result, these four species are unlikely to occur in the four tidally influenced waterways referenced in your letter.

### *Atlantic sturgeon*

The Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus oxyrinchus*) is a subspecies of sturgeon distributed along the eastern coast of North America from Hamilton Inlet, Labrador, Canada to Cape Canaveral, Florida, USA. We have designated five DPSs based on genetic data (77 FR 5880 and 77 FR 5914, February 6, 2012). The DPSs include the Gulf of Maine (threatened), as well as the New York Bight, Chesapeake Bay, Carolina, and South Atlantic (all endangered). Atlantic sturgeon leave their natal rivers and mix in the marine environment; therefore, sturgeon originating from any of the five DPSs can be affected by threats in the marine, estuarine, and riverine environment that occur far from natal spawning rivers. Currently we have no records of Atlantic sturgeon in any of Virginia Beach's tidal creeks. However, they are known to use the nearby Chesapeake Bay and suitable coastal and marine habitats for feeding may be present near the project site. Eggs, larvae, and juveniles are not expected to occur near the project site; only sub-adult or adult sturgeon undertaking coastal migrations could potentially be present in or near the tidal creeks and bays of the project area, presumably from March through November.

As you may know, any discretionary Federal action, such as the approval or funding of a project by a Federal agency, that may affect a listed species must undergo consultation pursuant to section 7 of the ESA of 1973, as amended. If the proposed project has the potential to affect listed species and it is being approved, permitted, or funded by a Federal agency, the lead Federal agency, or their designated non-Federal representative, is responsible for determining whether the proposed action is likely to affect these species. The Federal agency would submit their determination along with justification for their determination and a request for concurrence, to the attention of the Section 7 Coordinator, NMFS Northeast Regional Office, Protected Resources Division, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. After reviewing this information, NMFS would then be able to conduct a consultation under section 7 of the ESA. Should you have any questions regarding these comments on ESA listed species, please contact Chris Vaccaro at 978-281-9167 or by email at [Christine.Vaccaro@noaa.gov](mailto:Christine.Vaccaro@noaa.gov).

**EFH in the Action Area**

As you have already consulted our region's EFH mapper website, we don't have any additional information on EFH to provide in this letter. If you have specific questions or concerns about possible impacts to EFH located in the project area, please contact John Nichols in our Annapolis field office at 410-267-5675 or by email at [John.Nichols@noaa.gov](mailto:John.Nichols@noaa.gov).

Sincerely,



for

Mary A. Colligan  
Assistant Regional Administrator  
for Protected Resources



**From:** [Julie Timm](#)  
**To:** [Ray Amoruso](#); [Nelson, Eric](#)  
**Subject:** FW: VBTES FTA/FHWA Presentation from May 6, 2013  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 11, 2013 10:50:38 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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FYI

Julie E. Timm, AICP, CEP  
Transit Development Officer  
Hampton Roads Transit  
509 East 18th Street, Building #4  
Norfolk, VA 23504  
(p) 757-222-6000 x6699  
(c) 757-771-0672  
[www.gohrt.com](http://www.gohrt.com)

---

**From:** daniel.koenig@dot.gov [mailto:daniel.koenig@dot.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 11, 2013 10:49 AM  
**To:** Marisel.lopez-cruz@dot.gov  
**Cc:** ryan.long@dot.gov; jose.granado@dot.gov; Adam.Jack@VDOT.Virginia.gov; Nelson.Lee@VDOT.Virginia.gov; Eric.Stringfield@VDOT.Virginia.gov; John.Simkins@dot.gov; Julie Timm  
**Subject:** RE: VBTES FTA/FHWA Presentation from May 6, 2013

Hi Marisel,

Thanks for your reply and clarification on FHWA's role as a participating agency in this EIS. We'll continue to coordinate as we progress. If you should have any other questions, don't hesitate to contact either Ryan or myself. Thanks.

-Dan

---

**From:** Lopez-Cruz, Marisel (FHWA)  
**Sent:** Monday, June 10, 2013 10:38 AM  
**To:** Koenig, Daniel (FTA)  
**Cc:** Long, Ryan (FTA); Granado, Jose (FHWA); Jack, Adam J. PE (VDOT); Lee, Nelson T. "Ty" PE (VDOT); Stringfield, Eric L. (VDOT); Simkins, John (FHWA)  
**Subject:** RE: VBTES FTA/FHWA Presentation from May 6, 2013

Hello,

We have discussed this with VDOT and internally, and because it is unknown if there would be any federal action (s) involved at our end, FHWA would like to continue being participating agency in the development of the Draft EIS. We are looking forward for the continue involvement in the development of this environmental document.

Thanks,  
Marisel

***Marisel López Cruz***

Planning and Environmental Specialist  
Federal Highway Administration  
400 North 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 750  
Richmond, Virginia 23219  
Phone: (804) 775-3376  
Fax: (804) 804-775-3356



Please consider the environment before printing this email

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**From:** Julie Timm [<mailto:jtimm@hrtransit.org>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, May 08, 2013 11:19 AM

**To:** Ray Amoruso; Nelson, Eric; Chandler, Chad; 'Lutke, Amanda'; Lee Roy Padgett; Koenig, Daniel (FTA); 'Inman, Amy (DRPT)'; Long, Ryan (FTA); Morkunas, Vida (FTA); Lopez-Cruz, Marisel (FHWA); 'Lee, Nelson T. "Ty" PE (VDOT)'; 'Stringfield, Eric L. (VDOT)'; 'Jack, Adam J. PE (VDOT)'; Simkins, John (FHWA); Mark Schnauffer; Samantha Sink; Don Lint

**Subject:** VBTES FTA/FHWA Presentation from May 6, 2013

Marisel,

Please find attached the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study FTA/FHWA Presentation from May 6, 2013 for your review. Notes have been included with key slides to describe areas where the proposed project crosses or potentially impacts federal aid roads.

If you or your team have any questions on this information, please feel free to contact me directly.

Respectfully,  
Julie

Julie E. Timm, AICP, CEP  
Transit Development Officer  
Hampton Roads Transit  
509 East 18th Street, Building #4  
Norfolk, VA 23504  
(p) 757-222-6000 x6699  
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FITZGERALD & HALLIDAY, INC.

72 Cedar Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106  
Tel. (860) 247-7200  
Fax (860) 247-7206

June 18, 2013

Ms. Shirl Dressler  
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries  
Wildlife Diversity Division  
4010 West Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23230

Subject: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study Alternatives Analysis / Draft Environmental Impact Statement (AA / DEIS)

Dear Ms. Dressler:

Under contract to HDR, Inc., Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. (FHI) is assisting Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) with the preparation of Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES). Our initial inquiry relative to federal endangered and/or threatened species and critical habitats within the project corridor was submitted to your office in December 2009. Since this time, options have been added for the fixed-route alignment in the Hilltop area along Laskin Road and station locations have been refined. Thus, FHI seeks to re-initiate our coordination efforts with your office and kindly requests any information including a statement of your concerns, if any, relative to potential impacts from the project relative to endangered and/or threatened species and critical habitats. Any information provided will be utilized in the preparation of the DEIS for the project.

The VBTES project involves assessing the environmental impact of various transit alternatives including bus, bus rapid transit, and light rail transit along approximately 10.8 miles of the former Norfolk Southern Corporation's rail right-of-way in Virginia Beach and eastward to the Oceanfront at 19<sup>th</sup> Street. This inactive rail corridor extends from Newtown Road at the Norfolk-Virginia Beach City line eastward to Birdneck Road in a line roughly parallel to Interstate 264. The Oceanfront extension of the corridor starts at Birdneck Road and stretches along 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Washington Street to 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Arctic. An alternative fixed-guideway alignment through the Hilltop area along Laskin Road, and two potential locations for a vehicle storage and maintenance facility are also under study. The study corridor is depicted on the attached four map sheets derived from the Kempsville, VA, Princess Anne, VA, and Virginia Beach, VA USGS Topographic Quadrangle Maps. With the exception of several proposed station locations (which are depicted by the "bulb-outs" on the attached map sheets), the study corridor being evaluated is roughly 500 feet wide.

The study area is largely the same as depicted in map sheets provided to you with our December 2009 correspondence. The main changes are the elimination of some of the initial station locations and

*Planning Consultants*



addition of others, as well as the Hilltop area alternative alignment west of Birdneck Road along the Laskin Road corridor.

Using the Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries BOVA online database (report attached), and based on general habitat characterization within the project corridor, we have preliminarily identified federal and state endangered and/or threatened species that could potentially be located within two miles of the project corridor. No species specific field surveys have been completed at this time. These include the following:

Species	Scientific Name	Tier	Status
Canebrake rattlesnake	<i>Crotalus horridus</i>	II	SE
Eastern chicken turtle	<i>Deirochelys reticularia reticularia</i>	I	SE
Loggerhead shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	I	ST
Migrant loggerhead shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus migrans</i>		ST
Dismal Swamp southeastern shrew	<i>Sorex longirostris fisheri</i>	IV	ST

We respectfully request your professional opinion on any anticipated impacts to these species, and any additional Threatened or Endangered species, from the proposed project.

We look forward to receiving any information you can provide us, and to future coordination with your office.

Very truly yours,

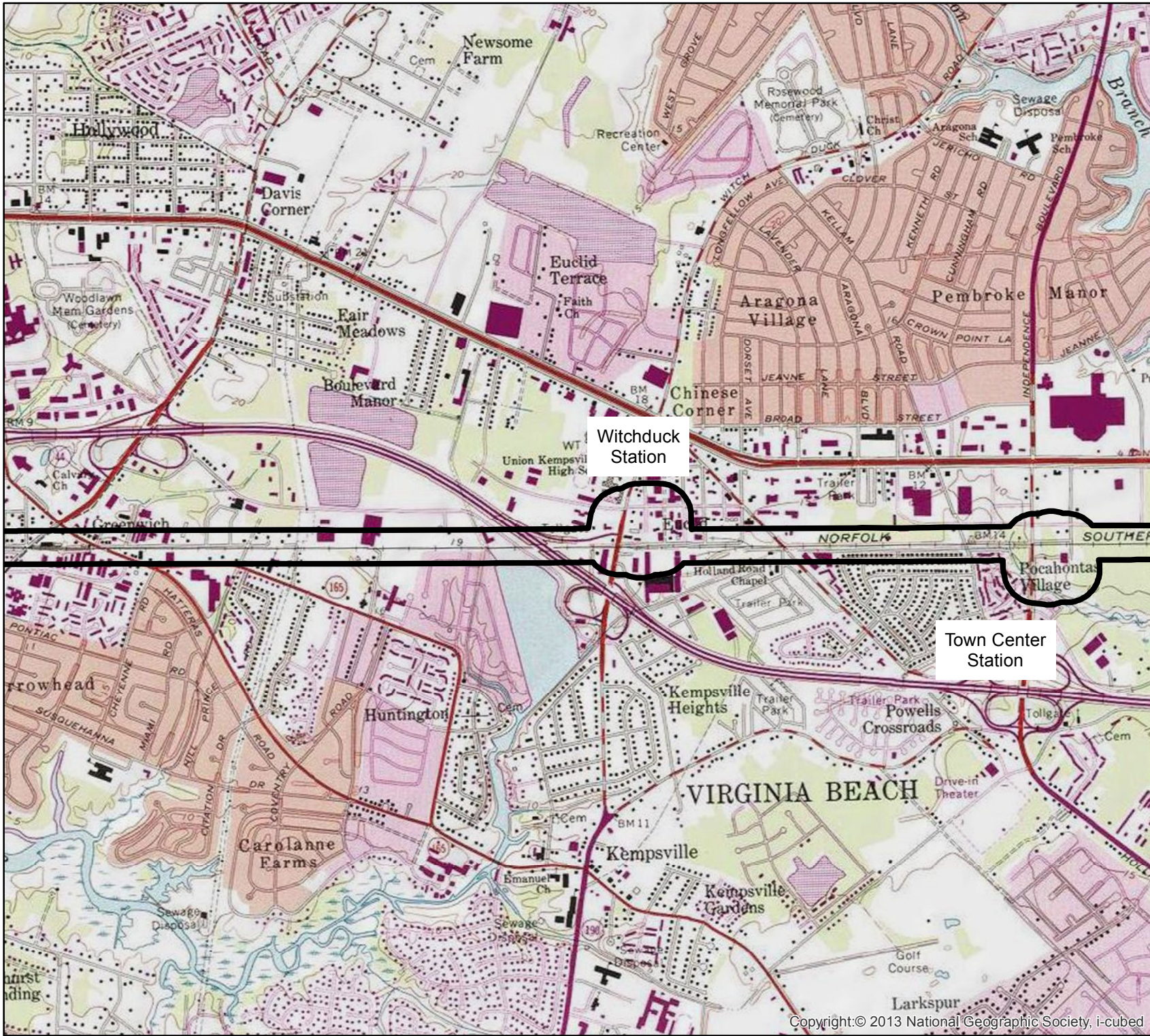
FITZGERALD & HALLIDAY, INC.

Stephanie Dyer-Carroll, AICP  
Senior Project Manager

Enclosure

cc: C. Tillery (FHI); E. Nelson (HDR); J. Timm (HRT)





Virginia Beach  
Transit  
Extension Study

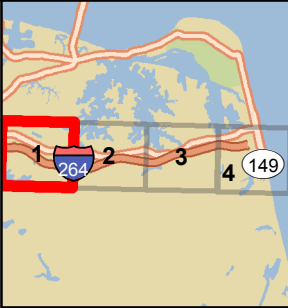
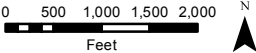
USGS Project  
Location

Page 1 of 4

USGS  
Quadrangle  
Boundary

Project Area

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USGS Quadrangle  
Kempsville, Princess Anne





Virginia Beach  
Transit  
Extension Study

USGS Project  
Location

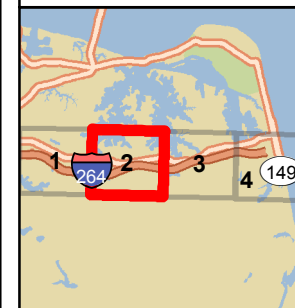
Page 2 of 4

USGS  
Quadrangle  
Boundary

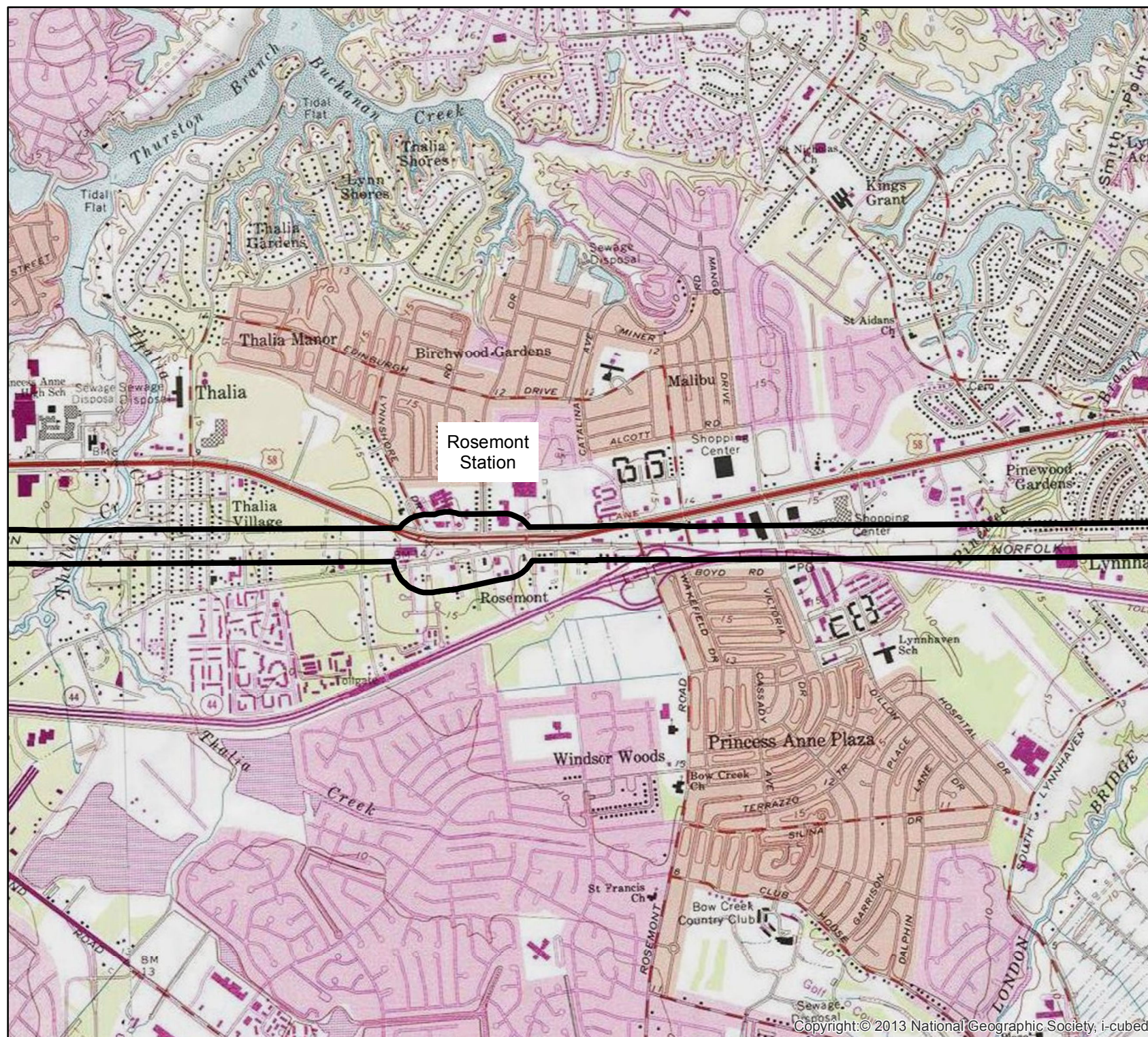
Project Area

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USGS Quadrangle  
Princess Anne

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Feet

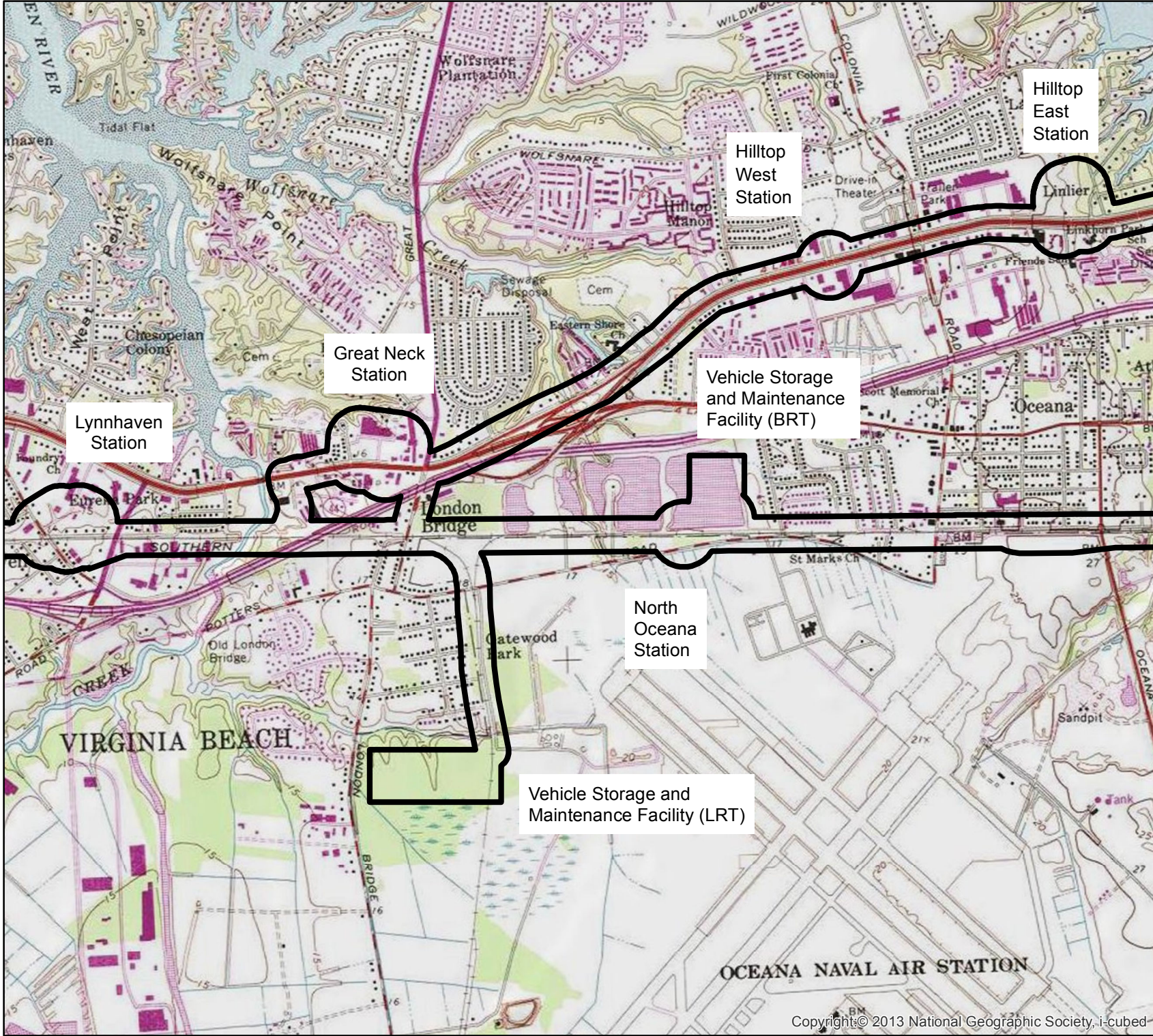


Original in Color - FHI - 4/11/2013



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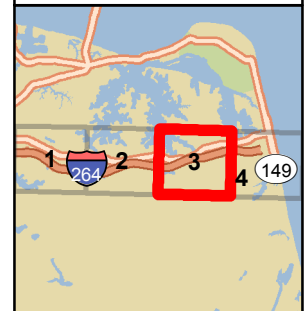
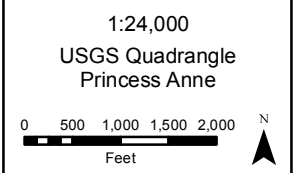
Virginia Beach  
Transit  
Extension Study

USGS Project  
Location

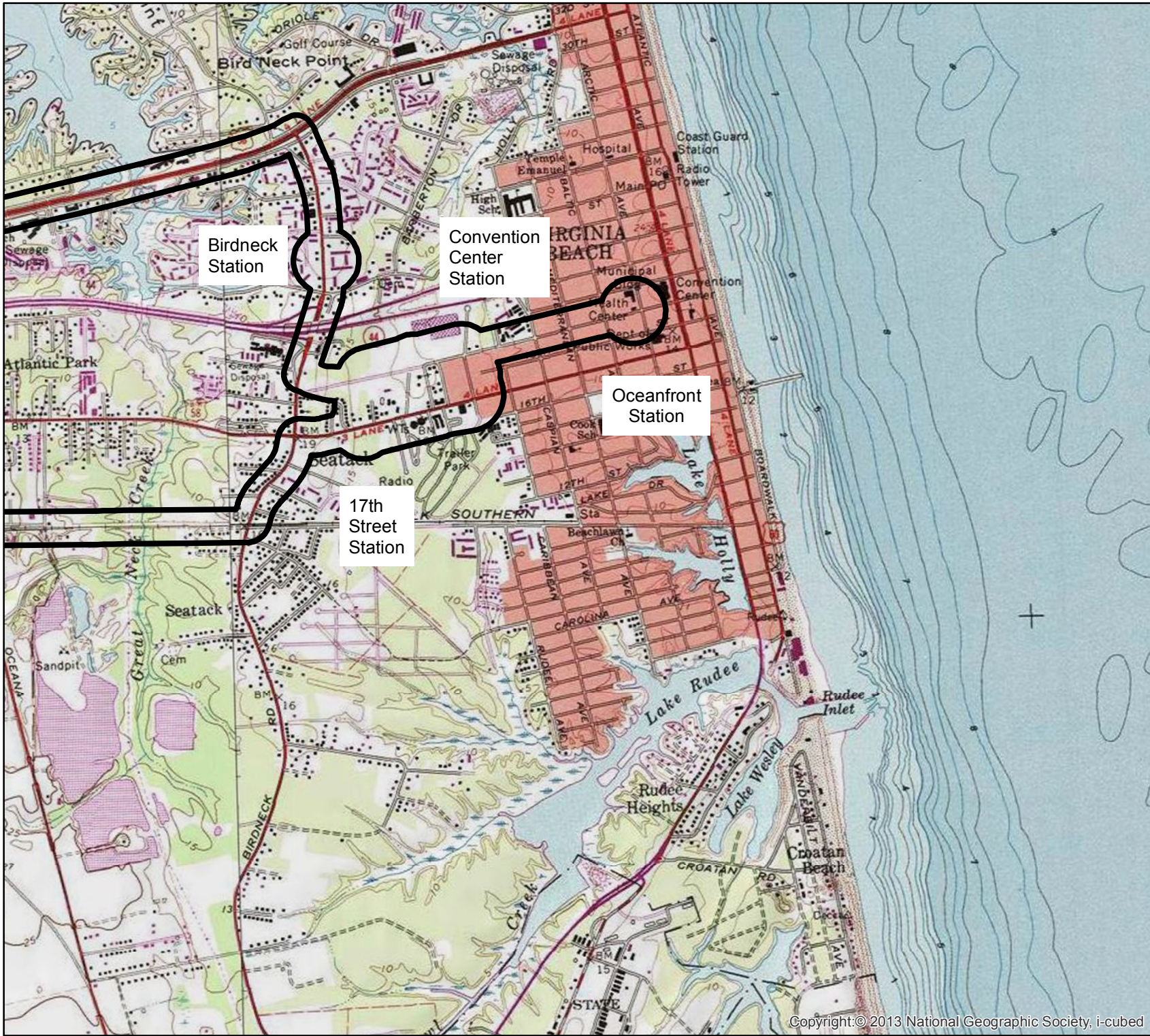
Page 3 of 4

USGS  
Quadrangle  
Boundary

Project Area







Virginia Beach  
Transit  
Extension Study

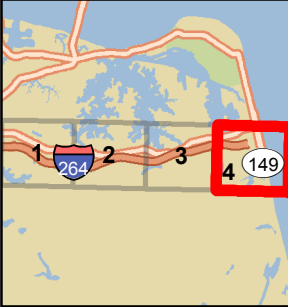
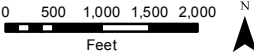
USGS Project  
Location

Page 4 of 4

USGS  
Quadrangle  
Boundary

Project Area

1:24,000  
USGS Quadrangle  
Princess Anne, Virginia Beach







## Virginia Department of Game and Inland

### Fisheries

5/14/2013 11:03:40 AM

### Fish and Wildlife Information Service

**25 Species Booklets for Fish, Amphibians, Reptiles, Birds, Mammals, Mollusks, Other Aquatic Invertebrates, Terrestrial Invertebrates, Marine Mammals having Status or Wildlife Action Plan codes "FE, FT, FS, SE, ST" in (810) Virginia Beach City**

[Help](#)

A Species Booklet Pop-up Window is opened when you click on any common name.

Table is currently ordered by Status importance \* - Click another column header to sort by that column.

<a href="#">Species Code</a>	<a href="#">Status *</a>	<a href="#">WAP **</a>	<a href="#">Common Name</a>	<a href="#">Scientific Name</a>
010032	FESE	II	<a href="#">Sturgeon, Atlantic</a>	<i>Acipenser oxyrinchus</i>
040183	FESE	IV	<a href="#">Tern, roseate</a>	<i>Sterna dougallii dougallii</i>
030073	FESE		<a href="#">Turtle, hawksbill sea</a>	<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>
030074	FESE		<a href="#">Turtle, Kemp's ridley sea</a>	<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>
030075	FESE		<a href="#">Turtle, leatherback sea</a>	<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>
030071	FTST	I	<a href="#">Turtle, loggerhead sea</a>	<i>Caretta caretta</i>
040120	FTST	I	<a href="#">Plover, piping</a>	<i>Charadrius melodus</i>
030072	FTST		<a href="#">Turtle, green sea</a>	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>
030064	SE	I	<a href="#">Turtle, eastern chicken</a>	<i>Deirochelys reticularia reticularia</i>
040118	SE	I	<a href="#">Plover, Wilson's</a>	<i>Charadrius wilsonia</i>
040110	SE	I	<a href="#">Rail, black</a>	<i>Laterallus jamaicensis</i>
050034	SE	I	<a href="#">Bat, Rafinesque's eastern big-eared</a>	<i>Corynorhinus rafinesquii macrotis</i>
030013	SE	II	<a href="#">Rattlesnake, canebrake</a>	<i>Crotalus horridus</i>
040096	ST	I	<a href="#">Falcon, peregrine</a>	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
040129	ST	I	<a href="#">Sandpiper, upland</a>	<i>Bartramia longicauda</i>
040293	ST	I	<a href="#">Shrike, loggerhead</a>	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>
040379	ST	I	<a href="#">Sparrow, Henslow's</a>	<i>Ammodramus henslowii</i>
040179	ST	I	<a href="#">Tern, gull-billed</a>	<i>Sterna nilotica</i>
030010	ST	II	<a href="#">Lizard, eastern glass</a>	<i>Ophisaurus ventralis</i>
050008	ST	IV	<a href="#">Shrew, Dismal Swamp southeastern</a>	<i>Sorex longirostris fisheri</i>
040403	ST		<a href="#">Falcon, Arctic peregrine</a>	<i>Falco peregrinus tundrius</i>



040292	ST		<a href="#">Shrike, migrant loggerhead</a>	<i>Lanius ludovicianus migrans</i>
040144	FC	IV	<a href="#">Knot, red</a>	<i>Calidris canutus rufus</i>
040093	FS	II	<a href="#">Eagle, bald</a>	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>
100002	FS	III	<a href="#">Skipper, Duke's (or scarce swamp)</a>	<i>Euphyes dukesi</i>

\* FE=Federal Endangered; FT=Federal Threatened; SE=State Endangered; ST=State Threatened; FP=Federal Proposed; FC=Federal Candidate; FS=Federal Species of Concern; CC=Collection Concern

\*\* I=VA Wildlife Action Plan - Tier I - Critical Conservation Need;  
 II=VA Wildlife Action Plan - Tier II - Very High Conservation Need;  
 III=VA Wildlife Action Plan - Tier III - High Conservation Need;  
 IV=VA Wildlife Action Plan - Tier IV - Moderate Conservation Need

List completeness is dependent on a search for published scientific records of which there may be many naming counties but few for other area types.

**audit no. 460240 5/14/2013 11:03:40 AM Virginia Fish and Wildlife Information Service**

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# United States Department of the Interior

## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Ecological Services  
6669 Short Lane  
Gloucester, Virginia 23061



**FEB 04 2013**

Greetings:

Due to increases in workload and refinement of our priorities in Virginia, this office will no longer provide individual responses to requests for environmental reviews. However, we want to ensure that U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service trust resources continue to be conserved. When that is not possible, we want to ensure that impacts to these important natural resources are minimized and appropriate permits are applied for and received. We have developed a website, [http://www.fws.gov/northeast/virginiafield/endspecies/Project\\_Reviews\\_Introduction.html](http://www.fws.gov/northeast/virginiafield/endspecies/Project_Reviews_Introduction.html), that provides the steps and information necessary to allow landowners, applicants, consultants, agency personnel, and any other individual or entity requiring review/approval of their project to complete a review and come to the appropriate conclusion.

The website will be frequently updated to provide new species/trust resource information and methods to review projects, so refer to the website for each project review to ensure that current information is utilized.

If you have any questions about project reviews or need assistance, please contact Troy Andersen of this office at (804) 693-6694, extension 166, or [troy\\_andersen@fws.gov](mailto:troy_andersen@fws.gov). For problems with the website, please contact Mike Drummond of this office at [mike\\_drummond@fws.gov](mailto:mike_drummond@fws.gov).

Sincerely,

Cindy Schulz  
Supervisor  
Virginia Field Office





FITZGERALD & HALLIDAY, INC.

72 Cedar Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106  
Tel. (860) 247-7200  
Fax (860) 247-7206

May 7, 2013

Ms. Cindy Schulz  
United States Fish & Wildlife Service  
6669 Short Lane  
Gloucester, VA 23061

RECEIVED

MAY 14 2013

Virginia Field Office

Subject: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

Dear Ms. Schulz:

Under contract to HDR, Inc., Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. (FHI) is assisting Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) with the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES). Our initial inquiry relative to federal endangered and/or threatened species and critical habitats within the project corridor was submitted to your office in December 2009. Your office responded in March 2010, indicating that no impacts were anticipated to federal endangered and/or threatened species and critical habitats. Since this time, options have been added for the fixed-route alignment in the Hilltop area along Laskin Road and station locations have been refined. At this time FHI seeks to re-initiate our coordination efforts with your office and kindly requests any information including a statement of your concerns, if any, relative to potential impacts from the project relative to federal endangered and/or threatened species and critical habitats. Any information provided will be utilized in the preparation of the DEIS for the project.

The VBTES project involves assessing the environmental impact of various transit alternatives including bus, bus rapid transit, and light rail transit along approximately 10.8 miles of the former Norfolk Southern Corporation's rail right-of-way in Virginia Beach and eastward to the Oceanfront at 19<sup>th</sup> Street. This inactive rail corridor extends from Newtown Road at the Norfolk-Virginia Beach City line eastward to Birdneck Road in a line roughly parallel to Interstate 264. The Oceanfront extension of the corridor starts at Birdneck Road and stretches along 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Washington Street to 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Arctic. An alternative fixed-guideway alignment to the Oceanfront is also being studied through the Hilltop area along Laskin Road, and two potential locations for a vehicle storage and maintenance facility are also under study. The study corridor is depicted on the attached four map sheets derived from the Kempsville, VA, Princess Anne, VA, and Virginia Beach, VA USGS Topographic Quadrangle Maps. With the exception of several proposed station locations (which are depicted by the "bulb-outs" on the attached map sheets), the study corridor being evaluated is roughly 500 feet wide.

The study area is largely the same as depicted in map sheets provided to you with our December 2009 correspondence. The main changes are the elimination of some of the initial station locations and addition of others, as well as the Hilltop area alternative alignment west of Birdneck Road along the Laskin Road corridor.

*Planning Consultants*



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Douglas W. Domenech  
Secretary of Natural Resources

**Department of Historic Resources**  
2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221

Kathleen S. Kilpatrick  
Director

Tel: (804) 367-2323  
Fax: (804) 367-2391  
TDD: (804) 367-2386  
[www.dhr.virginia.gov](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov)

June 26, 2013

Ryan Long, Community Planner  
Federal Transit Administration, Region III  
1760 Market Street, Suite 500  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Re: Virginia Beach Transit Extension – Section 106 Initiation  
City of Virginia Beach, Virginia  
DHR File No. 2009-1705

Dear Mr. Long,

On June 6, 2013, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) received information regarding the above-referenced project for our review and comment pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. We understand that the proposed project may be receiving federal funding through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and FTA would like to initiate Section 106.

DHR understands that Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) is studying a proposed extension of transit service into the City of Virginia Beach, Virginia. Currently being studied under a Draft EIS, pursuant to NEPA, the project will connect the existing light rail service at Newtown Road to the Virginia Beach Oceanfront. The proposed extension will run along the inactive National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) -eligible Norfolk Southern Rail Corridor, purchased by the City of Virginia Beach in 2012. Other corridors are also under consideration using light rail and bus rapid transit fixed-guide way options for the extension. We understand that the range of alternatives may change.

Thank you for initiating Section 106 with our office. We look forward to working with you on the development of the Area of Potential Effects and list of consulting parties. We have a meeting scheduled with your consultant to review the project on July 17, 2013. Should you have any additional questions, please contact me at (804) 482-6084, or via email at [andrea.kampinen@dhr.virginia.gov](mailto:andrea.kampinen@dhr.virginia.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andrea Kampinen".

Andrea Kampinen, Architectural Historian  
Office of Review and Compliance

Cc: Dan Koenig, FTA; Julie Timm, HRT; Jeanne Barnes, HDR, Inc.

Administrative Services  
10 Courthouse Ave.  
Petersburg, VA 23803  
Tel: (804) 862-6416  
Fax: (804) 862-6196

Capital Region Office  
2801 Kensington Ave.  
Richmond, VA 23221  
Tel: (804) 367-2323  
Fax: (804) 367-2391

Tidewater Region Office  
14415 Old Courthouse Way  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Newport News, VA 23608  
Tel: (757) 886-2807  
Fax: (757) 886-2808

Western Region Office  
962 Kime Lane  
Salem, VA 24153  
Tel: (540) 387-5443  
Fax: (540) 387-5446

Northern Region Office  
5357 Main Street  
P.O. Box 519  
Stephens City, VA 22655  
Tel: (540) 868-7029  
Fax: (540) 868-7033





**Doug Domenech**  
*Secretary of Natural Resources*

**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA**  
*Department of Game and Inland Fisheries*

**Robert W. Duncan**  
*Director*

June 27, 2013

Stephanie Dyer-Carroll, Senior Project Manager  
Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.  
72 Cedar Street  
Hartford, CT 06106

**Re: VA Beach Transit Extension Study Alternatives Analysis**

Dear Ms. Dyer-Carroll,

We appreciate your interest in submitting your project(s) for review by VDGIF to ensure the protection of sensitive wildlife resources during project development. Unfortunately, due to staffing limitations, we are unable to review pre-applications or scoping documents submitted to our Department. Please note that lack of a response from VDGIF does not constitute a "no comment" response, nor does it imply support of the project or associated activities. It simply means that VDGIF is unable to review your pre-application submittal.

To review your project site for the location of wildlife resources under our jurisdiction, including threatened and endangered wildlife, we recommend accessing the Virginia Fish and Wildlife Information System (VAFWIS) at <http://vafwis.org/fwis/>.

If you have further questions or need additional information about VDGIF's Environmental Programs, please visit: <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/environmental-programs/>.

Please feel free to attach a copy of this correspondence to any applications or documents you may submit for your project to state or federal permitting agencies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Angela G. Weller".

Angela G. Weller  
Environmental Services Section



# HAMPTON ROADS TRANSIT

July 10, 2013

Brigid Hynes-Cherin  
Regional Administrator, Region III  
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)  
1760 Market Street, Suite 500  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-4124

SUBJECT: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES)  
Official Re-designation of Study from AA/SDEIS to DEIS

Dear Ms. <sup>Brigid</sup>~~Hynes-Cherin~~,

I received your letter on June 18, 2013 regarding the requirement to prepare a Notice of Intent to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES). As you noted in your letter, this was previously being completed as Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Hampton Roads Transit will draft and submit a Notice of Intent as defined in your letter for your review and publication. We have also recently submitted updated requests to resource agencies (USFWS, NOAA, USCG, USACE, VDGIF) asking for additional coordination on the Hilltop area alignment alternative that runs along Laskin Road. Copies of those letters have been forwarded electronically to your staff for their review. FTA recently confirmed FHWA Participating Agency status and sent an official coordination letter to Virginia SHPO to start Section 106 consultation. Hampton Roads Transit is continuing on-going coordination with the U.S. Navy. Please let us know what additional requirements may be necessary to ensure compliance with FTA scoping requirements.

It is important to also clarify at this time that this project was previously identified as the VBTES AA/SDEIS as it fell under the SAFTEA-LU Alternatives Analysis (AA) process. These AA requirements were eliminated from the federal process under MAP-21. Based on this change and the change in the NEPA Class of Action, Hampton Roads Transit will formally re-designate this project from the "VBTES AA/SDEIS" to the "VBTES DEIS". Hampton Roads Transit will review and remove all technical AA requirements that are outside the FTA NEPA requirements and that are not supportive of the project's Purpose and Need. At a minimum, this will include Bus Rapid Transit extension options in the city's north-south corridors for the BRT alternatives



and the TSM alternative that were specifically and only included in the project description as part of the FTA AA process. Per the NEPA alternative analysis requirements, we will review each east-west build alternative currently under consideration to determine if it meets the projects purpose and need, and we will consider any new alternatives identified by the public during our outreach efforts or by agencies during our inter-agency coordination process.

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Ray Amoruso at [ramoruso@hrtrasnit.org](mailto:ramoruso@hrtrasnit.org) or 757-222-6000 ext. 6133.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'William Harrell', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William Harrell  
President and CEO  
Hampton Roads Transit

Cc: Ryan Long, FTA  
Dan Koenig, FTA  
Ray Amoruso, Chief Planning and Development Officer, Hampton Roads Transit  
Julie Timm, Transit Development Officer, Hampton Roads Transit

Document Control Number: EX516-GS-19 10037



INFORMATION SERVICES ORDER FORM  
Updated 11/10



**Mail or Email to: Project Review Coordinator**  
**DCR Division of Natural Heritage**  
**217 Governor Street**  
**Richmond, VA 23219**  
**Voice: (804) 371-2708 Fax: (804) 371-2674**  
**nhreview@dcr.virginia.gov**

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW SERVICES:**

  **X**   **Project Review** (30 calendar day turnaround)..\$90 per site; add \$35 for 1-5 natural heritage occurrences (rare plants, rare animals, significant communities and karst) and \$60 for 6 or more occurrences.  
Multi-quad project area \$90 per quad.

       **Project Review with Accompanying Map**...\$250 per site; for projects with potential impact to Natural Heritage Resources, written comments with 8.5 X 11 map displaying Natural Heritage Screening Coverage.

       **Priority Service** (5 business day turnaround)..\$500 surcharge

**Details:** Describe project in the space below, please include detailed project description, project location information including **latitude, longitude**, acreage, and existing site conditions (photographs if available).

Attach additional information as necessary. In order to ensure an accurate assessment, please submit **an electronic copy of a site map** (preferably from a USGS topo map with identified project boundaries) and all other information to **nhreview@dcr.virginia.gov** or fax a map to: **Environmental Review Coordinator @ (804) 371-2674**. Please include the project title on all correspondence. **Incomplete submittal of information will delay the review process.**

**Project Title:** Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

**Project Description:**

**Background:** The VBTES project involves assessing the environmental impact of various transit alternatives including bus, bus rapid transit, and light rail transit along approximately 10.8 miles of the former Norfolk Southern Corporation's rail right-of-way in Virginia Beach and eastward to the Oceanfront at 19<sup>th</sup> Street. This inactive rail corridor extends from Newtown Road at the Norfolk-Virginia Beach City line eastward to Birdneck Road in a line roughly parallel to Interstate 264. The Oceanfront extension of the corridor starts at Birdneck Road and stretches along 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Washington Street to 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Arctic. An alternative fixed-guideway alignment through the Hilltop area along Laskin Road, and two potential locations for a vehicle storage and maintenance facility are also under study.



Our initial inquiry relative to Natural Heritage resources was submitted in December 2009. Your office responded in January 2010, indicating that no impacts were anticipated to Natural Heritage resources and state threatened plants and insects. Since this time, options have been added for the fixed-route alignment in the Hilltop area along Laskin Road and station locations have been refined.

**Project Location:** The study corridor for the various alignment options is depicted on the attached four map sheets derived from the Kempsville, VA, Princess Anne, VA, and Virginia Beach, VA USGS Topographic Quadrangle Maps. With the exception of several proposed station and vehicle maintenance locations, depicted by the “bulb-outs” on the attached map sheets, the study corridor being evaluated is roughly 500 feet wide. The approximate center point of the corridor is Lat: 36 50 21.94N, Long: 76 05 24.53W.

**Acreage:** For the purposes of this Natural Heritage project review, we are concerned with the presence of endangered and/or threatened species within approximately 250 feet of the center line of the corridor. In addition to the corridor we are also interested in information on areas where potential stations or vehicle storage and maintenance facilities are planned. The location of these proposed stations is still under review but they will likely be located within the “bulb-outs” depicted on the USGS maps referenced above. The entire study area including the 500-foot wide corridor, station locations and maintenance facilities encompasses approximately 1,200 acres within the City of Virginia Beach.

**Existing Site Conditions:** The project study corridor is heavily developed on both sides from Newtown Road to the Virginia Beach Oceanfront. Development along the corridor is a mix of commercial, industrial, and residential properties. Major water crossings include Thalia Creek to the east of Virginia Beach Town Center, London Bridge Creek, Great Neck Creek, and Upper Linkhorn Bay. Development in the vicinity of Thalia Creek, London Bridge Creek and Great Neck Creek is less dense than the surrounding area. The only other portion of the corridor that is not heavily developed is where it passes north and northeast of Oceana Naval Base. In general, narrow drainage ditch wetlands and grassy and/or shrubby areas characterize much of the inactive railroad right-of-way. Fieldwork for this portion of the project was undertaken in 2009. Additional fieldwork was undertaken in April 2013, including a survey of the Laskin Road corridor. The conditions along the Laskin Road corridor consist of a mix of commercial, industrial and residential properties. The only major water crossing within this portion of the alignment is Upper Linkhorn Bay. Photos 1-4 below are typical representations of the topography, vegetation, and environmental conditions found along the inactive railroad corridor. Photo 5 depicts conditions along Laskin Road. Photos 6-9 depict conditions at the major water crossings.

**Photo 1: Looking east along corridor toward I-264 overpass with Witchduck Road just further to the east**



**Photo 2: Looking east from a point just west of Virginia Beach Town Center**





**Photo 3: Looking east from a point just west of Thalia Creek Crossing**



**Photo 4: Near Oceana Naval Base**



**Photo 5: Laskin Road west of First Colonial Road**



**Photo 6: Thalia Creek Crossing**





**Photo 7: London Bridge Creek and Vicinity**



**Photo 8: Great Neck Creek and Vicinity**



**Photo 9: Upper Linkhorn Bay**

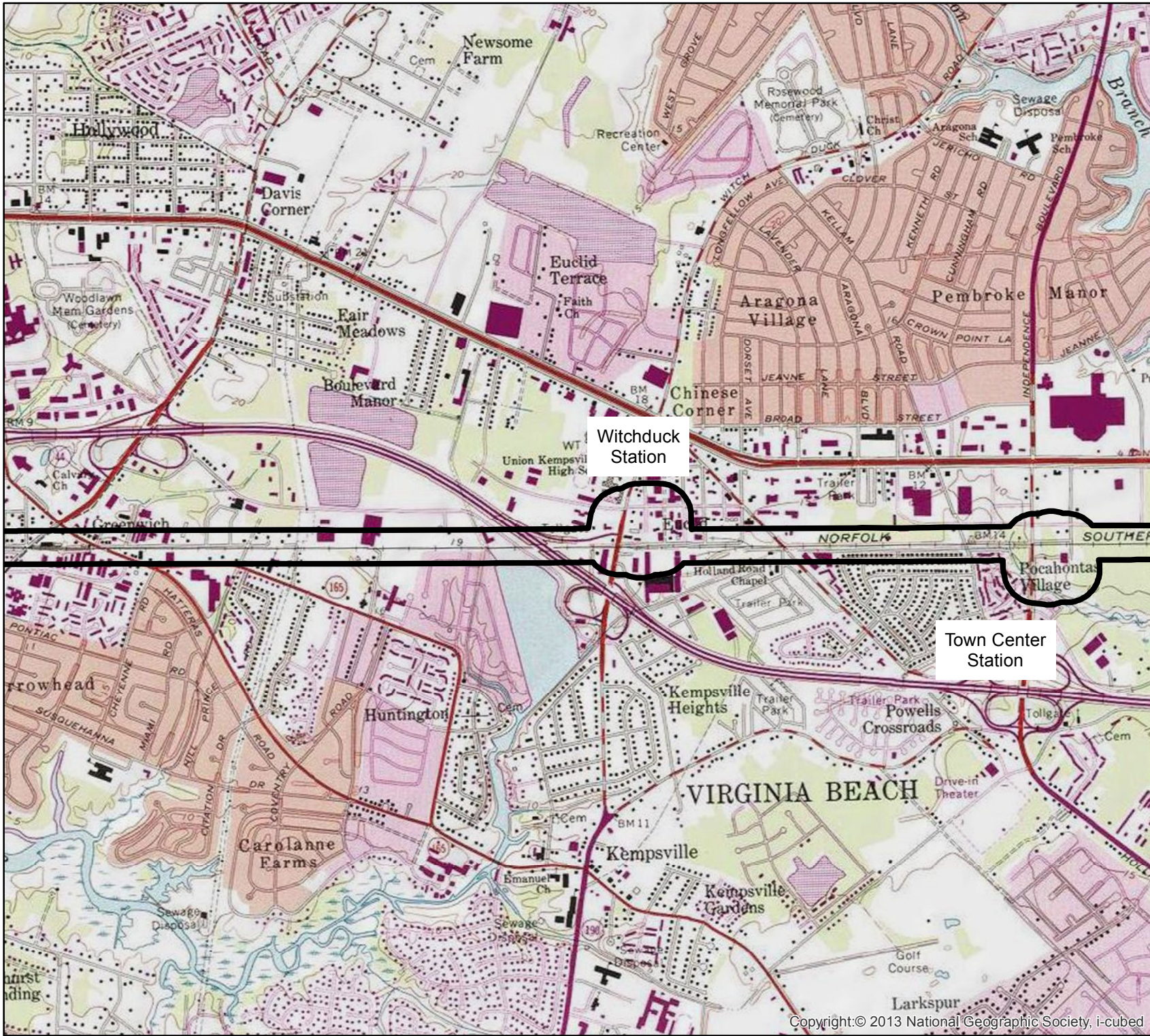


**Send data and invoice (if applicable) to:**

**Stephanie Dyer-Carroll, AICP**  
**Senior Project Manager**  
**Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.**  
**72 Cedar Street**  
**Hartford, CT 06106**  
[sdyer-carroll@fhiplan.com](mailto:sdyer-carroll@fhiplan.com)

**Phone (860) 247-7200**  
**Fax: (860) 247-7206**

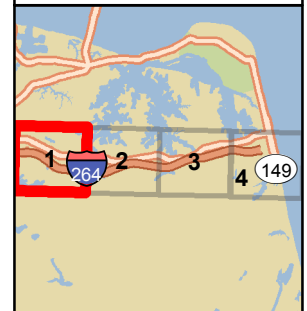
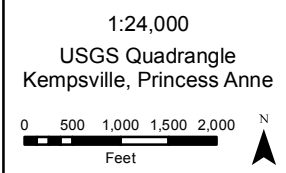




Virginia Beach  
Transit  
Extension Study

USGS Project  
Location  
Page 1 of 4

- USGS  
Quadrangle  
Boundary
- Project Area





Virginia Beach  
Transit  
Extension Study

USGS Project  
Location

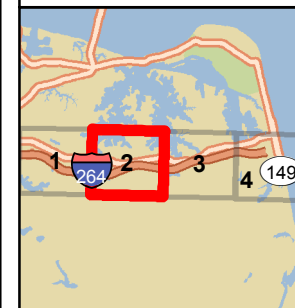
Page 2 of 4

USGS  
Quadrangle  
Boundary

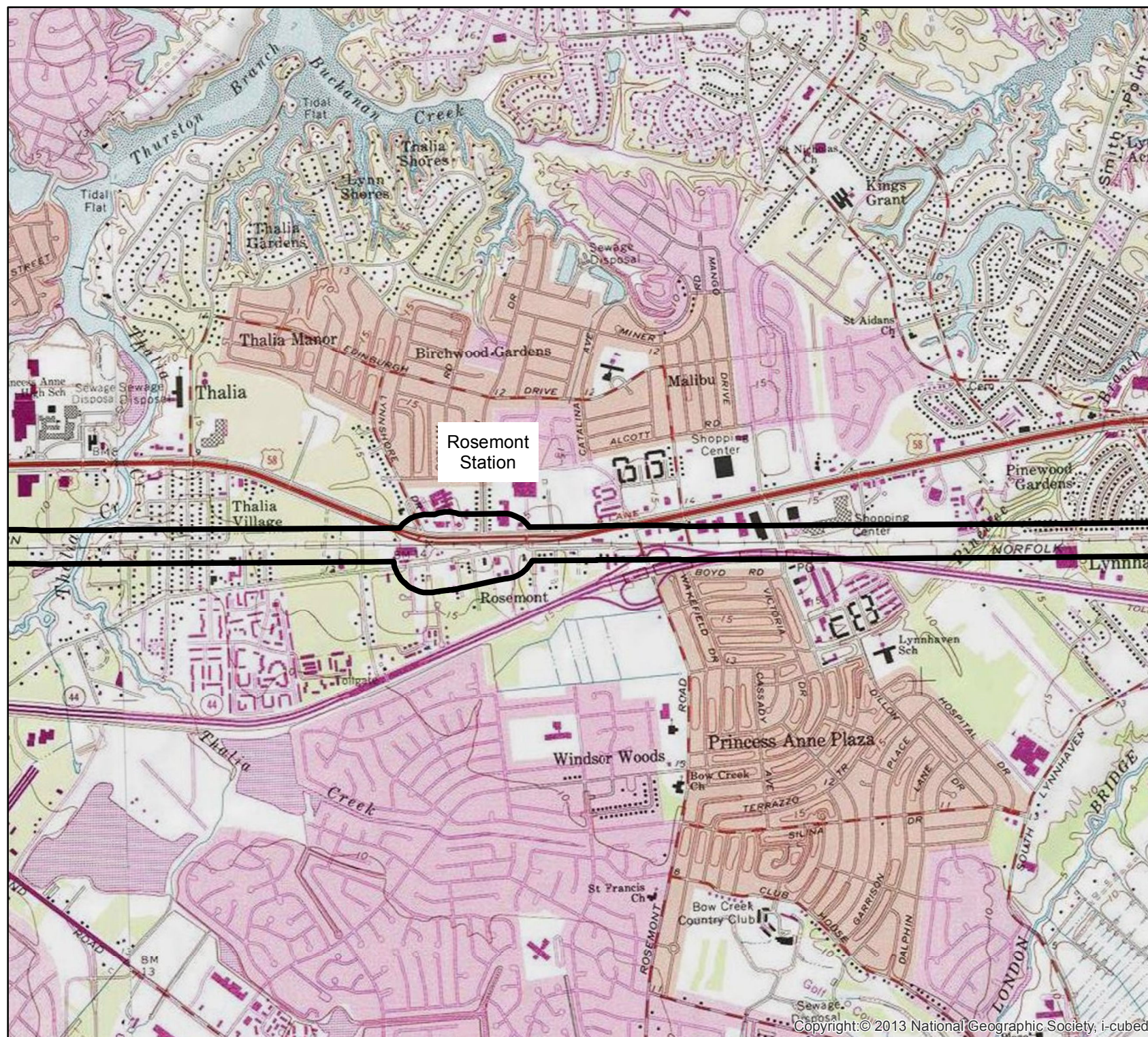
Project Area

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USGS Quadrangle  
Princess Anne

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Feet

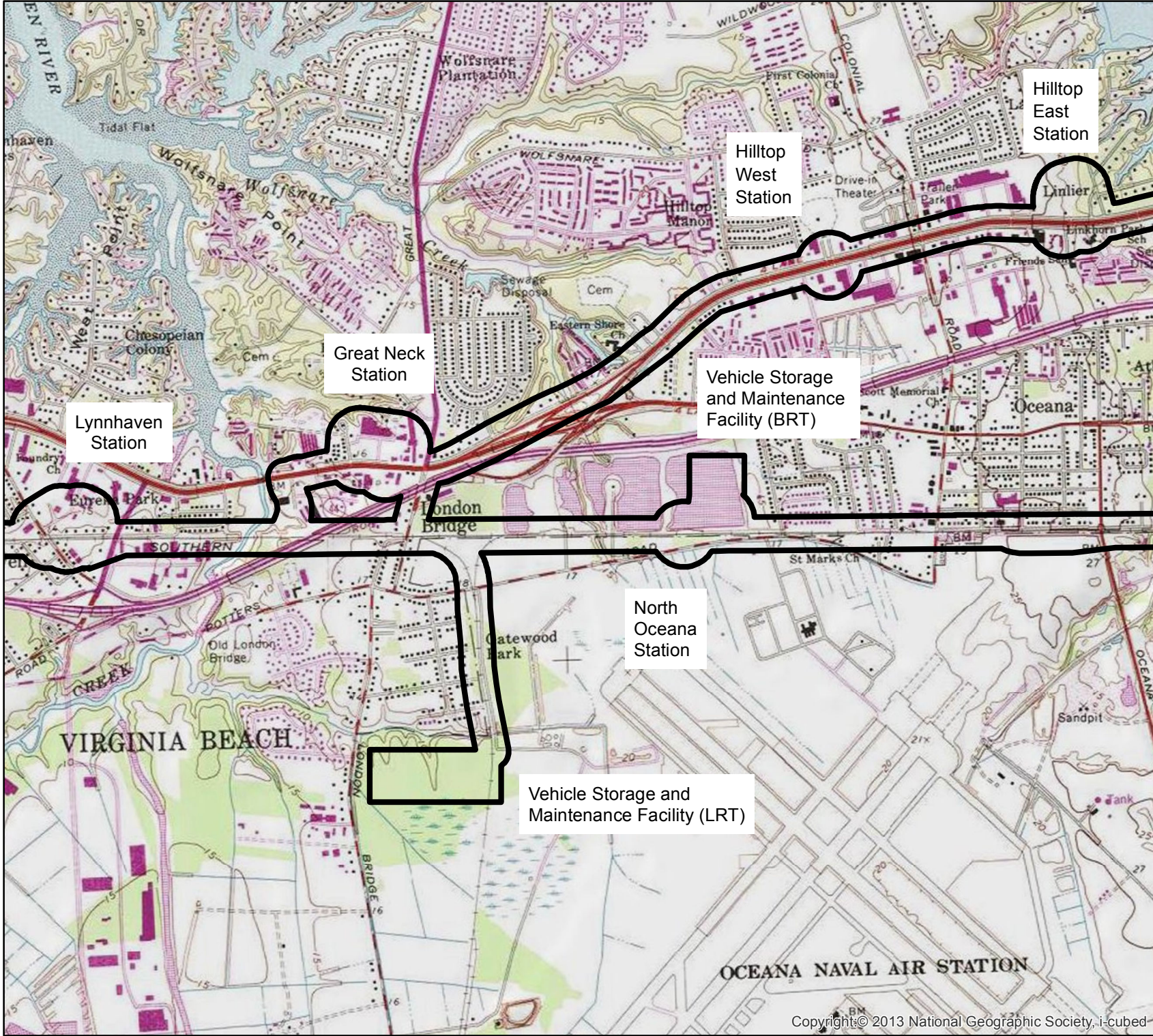


Original in Color - FHI - 4/11/2013



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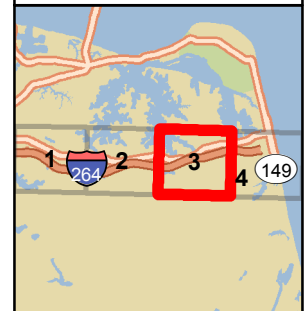
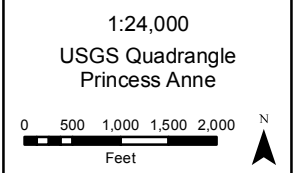




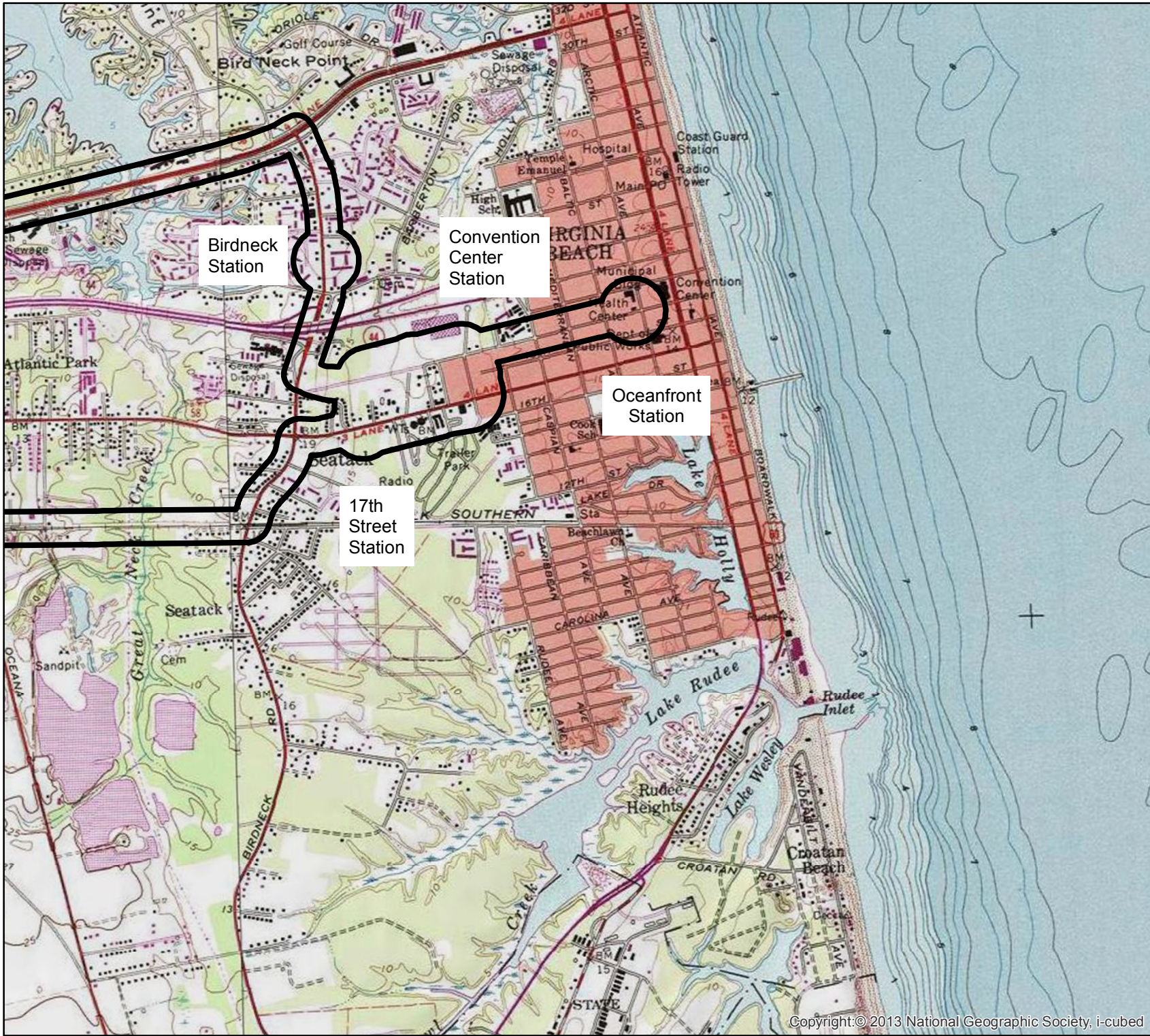
Virginia Beach  
Transit  
Extension Study

USGS Project  
Location  
Page 3 of 4

- USGS  
Quadrangle  
Boundary
- Project Area







Virginia Beach  
Transit  
Extension Study

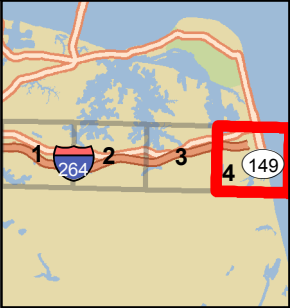
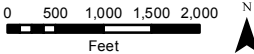
USGS Project  
Location

Page 4 of 4

USGS  
Quadrangle  
Boundary

Project Area

1:24,000  
USGS Quadrangle  
Princess Anne, Virginia Beach







U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Transit  
Administration**

REGION III  
Delaware, District of  
Columbia, Maryland,  
Pennsylvania, Virginia,  
West Virginia

1760 Market Street  
Suite 500  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-4124  
215-656-7100  
215-656-7260 (fax)

Mr. William Harrell  
President and CEO  
Hampton Roads and Transit  
3400 Victoria Blvd.  
Hampton, VA 23661

AUG 2 2013

**Re: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES)  
Alternatives to Be Considered in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)**

Dear *William* Mr. Harrell:

This is in response to your letter of July 10, 2013, in which you responded to my letter of June 18th indicating that a new Notice of Intent (NOI) would need to be issued under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the VBTES project. We understand from your letter and from the July 17, 2013 FTA and HRT regularly occurring project meeting that HRT would like to remove all Bus Rapid Transit alternatives, except for the one on the existing right-of-way and the Laskin/Birdneck Road branch. It appears that this decision is based on a misconception that the north/south BRT alternatives were only being required as part of the Alternatives Analysis process. In fact, NEPA requires that all reasonable alternatives be analyzed and that a determination that an alternative is not reasonable needs to be documented and discussed in Chapter 2 of the DEIS.

As a result, the NOI will need to indicate that BRT is one of the alternatives still under consideration, including the operation of BRT bus service beyond the exclusive BRT guideway onto arterial roads. In this case, running BRT off the right of way onto some arterial north/south roads is required so as not to degrade BRT as a reasonable alternative. BRT buses would operate off the guideway to collect and distribute passengers and proceed via the guideway to Newtown Road. This would avoid multiple passenger transfers from collector/distributor bus service to BRT service and then to LRT. The ridership forecasts of the alternatives will help to determine if benefits of integrated feeder/line-haul BRT service is sufficient to make this a reasonable alternative.

FTA is available to work with your staff to develop a reasonable BRT alternative. That being said, if adequate information is prepared as part of the NEPA process, that would result in a finding that BRT is not a reasonable alternative, this could be explained in Chapter 2 of the DEIS and BRT would not have to be carried throughout the document. In order for this to happen, HRT would need to document the decision, and obtain FTA approval, demonstrating how the alternative does not meet the project's stated purpose and need.

**Mr. Harrell**

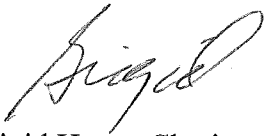
**Re: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES)**

Page 2

With regard to the NOI for the VBTES DEIS, FTA has a draft NOI for your staff to review and provide comments on. This draft NOI identifies BRT as a reasonable alternative; however, we have not attempted to provide a detailed description of the BRT alternative. Instead, we simply note that the final range of alternatives will be described in the DEIS, along with a description of those alternatives that were not carried forward and the reason why. We are still optimistic that this document can be issued in the near future.

Please contact me directly at (215) 656-7263 if you have any concerns or have your staff contact Mr. Ryan Long, Community Planner, by telephone at (215) 656-7051 or by email at [ryan.long@dot.gov](mailto:ryan.long@dot.gov) should they have any questions regarding this letter.

Sincerely,



Brigid Hynes-Cherin,  
Regional Administrator

cc: Alex Eckmann, FTA  
Ryan Long, FTA  
Dan Koenig, FTA  
Ray Amoruso, HRT  
Julie Timm, HRT



**From:** [Kampinen, Andrea \(DHR\)](#)  
**To:** [daniel.koenig@dot.gov](mailto:daniel.koenig@dot.gov); [ryan.long@dot.gov](mailto:ryan.long@dot.gov)  
**Cc:** [Barnes, Jeanne](#); [Nelson, Eric](#); [jtimmm@hrtransit.org](mailto:jtimmm@hrtransit.org); [Mark E. Shea \(meshea@vbgov.com\)](mailto:Mark.E.Shea@vbgov.com)  
**Subject:** Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study  
**Date:** Friday, August 02, 2013 11:03:02 AM

---

Dan and Ryan,

As a follow up from our meeting on July 25<sup>th</sup>, I intend to formally comment on the Area of Potential Effects and Survey Methodology in order to keep 106 moving on this project, however there were a few survey questions I needed to ask our Survey Coordinator, Carey Jones. I discussed Jeanne's suggestions for architectural survey along the corridor with Carey, but before we made a decision, Carey wanted the opinion of our Deputy Director. Unfortunately, she is out of the office this week, but due back next week. Carey and I should be able to catch her for a few minutes once she gets caught up. As soon as I have an answer, I'll speak with Jeanne before I put everything into a formal comment letter. I believe HDR said they wouldn't be able to start surveying until September, so I hope we have a little time.

For future correspondence, I'll just stick to our arrangement we've had for other FTA projects. I'll copy both of you on major 106 milestones, but keep most of the technical back and forth questions between DHR and the consultants. If you prefer otherwise, just let me know.

Thanks,

Andrea

**Andrea Kampinen**  
Architectural Historian, Office of Review and Compliance  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
2801 Kensington Avenue  
Richmond, VA 23221  
(804) 482-6084  
Fax: (804) 367-2391  
[andrea.kampinen@dhr.virginia.gov](mailto:andrea.kampinen@dhr.virginia.gov)

aeronautical uses at existing airports or commercial space launch sites.

Paragraph 5–6.5b (formerly 311b) adds clarification that this applies to establishment of jet routes as they are one type of federal airway.

Paragraph 5–6.5c (formerly 311c) adds the example “reduction in times of use (e.g., from continuous to intermittent, or use by a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM))” to the list of “such as” actions. This clarifies that actions to return all or part of special use airspace (SUA) to the National Airspace System (NAS) includes reduction in times of use.

Paragraph 5–6.5g (formerly 311g) is slightly modified to include “Required Navigation Performance” (RNP). It also specifies that a Noise Screening Tool or other FAA-approved environmental screening methodology should be used.

Paragraph 5–6.5h (formerly 311h) is slightly modified to include “modification” of helicopter routes to clarify that establishment of helicopter routes also includes modification of these routes as long as they channel helicopter activity over major thoroughfares.

Paragraph 5–6.5i (formerly 311i) updates reference to a Noise Screening Tool (NST) or other FAA approved environmental screening methodology.

Paragraph 5–6.6b is modified to provide clarity that the categorical exclusion applies to an aerobatic practice area containing one aerobatic practice box in accordance with 1050.1E Guidance Memo #5, *Clarification of FAA Order 1050.1E CATEX 312b to Aerobatic Actions*.

Change 18 revises the discussion of EA format and process to streamline the explanation of each element and clarify that an EA should be concise and focused and should not be as detailed as an EIS (see Paragraph 6–2). Since this section has been reduced in detail, there are cross-references to the corresponding EIS sections for environmental assessments that may need to be more substantial.

Change 19 revises the language in notices soliciting public comment on draft EAs and draft EISs, stating that personal information provided by commenters (e.g., addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses) may be made publicly available (see Paragraphs 6–2.2.e and 7–1.2.d(1)(a)).

Change 20 adds a new paragraph to explain the conditions under which the FAA may choose to terminate preparation of an EIS and clarifies what steps the FAA should take when this situation occurs (see Paragraph 7–1.3).

Change 21 adds a discussion of FAA policy with respect to consideration of

transboundary impacts resulting from FAA actions (see Paragraph 8–3).

Change 22 updates the discussion of international actions to be consistent with DOT Order 5610.1, including guidance on coordination within the FAA/DOT and U.S. State Department when communication with foreign governments is needed (see Paragraph 8–4).

Change 23 clarifies the alternative process to consider environmental impacts before taking emergency actions necessary to protect the lives and safety of the public in emergency circumstances. These alternative arrangements are limited to actions necessary to control the immediate impacts of an emergency. Order 1050.1F expands this section to provide for emergency procedures when a CATEX or EA would be the appropriate level of NEPA review (see Paragraph 8–5).

Change 24 clarifies and expands on requirements relating to FAA adoption of other agencies’ NEPA documents (see Paragraph 8–7). Clarifies requirements for legal sufficiency review of adopted documents and when this review is required (see Paragraph 8–7.d). Also adds a discussion of recirculation requirements for EISs to highlight that there are some circumstances in which adopted documents must be re-circulated (see Paragraph 8–7.f).

Change 25 clarifies that there is no specified format for written re-evaluations. It also adds a statement to explain that written re-evaluations may be prepared even when they are not required. In addition, this section also adds a discussion of combining decision documents with written re-evaluations (i.e., a “WR/ROD”) (see Paragraph 9–2).

Change 26 streamlines, consolidates, and clarifies provisions relating to review, approval, and signature authority for FAA NEPA documents (see Chapter 10).

Change 27 revises text in Paragraph 11–2 to clarify the authority of various parties and to be consistent with other FAA Orders (see Paragraph 11–2).

Change 28 clarifies provisions relating to explanatory guidance (see Paragraph 11–4).

Change 29 adds definitions of “NEPA lead” and “special purpose laws and requirements.” It deletes the definition of “Environmental Due Diligence Audit” because this term is no longer used in FAA Order 1050.1F. Definitions of “environmental studies”, “approving official”, and “decisionmaker” are revised to reflect current practice. The definition of “launch facility” is changed to “commercial space launch site” to be consistent with 14 CFR part 420. The definition of “noise sensitive

area” is revised to include a reference to Table 1 of 14 CFR part 150 rather than Appendix A of FAA Order 1050.1E, to provide context in light of the removal of Appendix A from proposed Order 1050.1F. (See Paragraph 11–5.b).

Issued in Washington, DC, on August 9, 2013.

**Lourdes Q. Maurice,**

*Executive Director, Office of Environment and Energy.*

[FR Doc. 2013–19734 Filed 8–13–13; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Transit Administration

#### Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study, Virginia

**AGENCY:** Federal Transit Administration (FTA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

**SUMMARY:** The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) are planning to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES). The VBTES will examine extending transit service from the eastern terminus of Norfolk’s existing Light Rail Transit (LRT) system, “The Tide,” at Newtown Road to the Virginia Beach Oceanfront either along the former Norfolk Southern Railroad right-of-way (NSRR ROW) that runs from Newtown Road to Birdneck Road or along the NSRR ROW to Laskin Road then onto Birdneck Road. From Birdneck Road, both alignments would extend onto 19th Street terminating at the Virginia Beach Oceanfront.

In 2000, FTA and HRT prepared the Norfolk-Virginia Beach East/West Light Rail Transit System Final EIS. This document looked at an 18-mile transit system connecting downtown Norfolk to the Pavilion area of Virginia Beach. In 2009, FTA and HRT began a Supplemental EIS for the VBTES that intended to evaluate changes in the project corridor since the 2000 EIS. As the Supplemental EIS progressed, FTA and HRT began studying an additional alternative alignment along Laskin Road. This alternative alignment and the additional amount of time that elapsed since work began on the Supplemental EIS led FTA to determine that a Supplemental EIS was no longer appropriate for the VBTES and instead a new EIS should be prepared. Pursuant



to 23 CFR 771.123(a), FTA and HRT now issue this Notice of Intent (NOI) for an EIS for the VBTES. Although the VBTES has been under consideration in some form since the 1980's, and was included in the 2000 Final EIS, this EIS will specifically rely on relevant information that has been developed over the last several years since the 2009 Supplemental EIS was proposed.

The EIS for the VBTES will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This NOI initiates formal scoping for the EIS, invites interested parties to participate in the process, provides information about the purpose and need for the study, includes the alternatives being considered for evaluation in the EIS, and identifies potential environmental effects to be considered.

HRT began its VBTES public involvement process in 2009. It held frequent public meetings in 2010, 2012, and 2013, and continues to receive public comments on the study today. HRT plans additional public meetings for September 2013 and November 2013. These continued opportunities for public involvement in the VBTES means no formal public scoping meetings are planned to be held for this EIS.

In 2009 and 2013, HRT, in coordination with FTA, contacted interested party agencies for the VBTES. As such, agencies that have previously responded to invitations to engage in the VBTES process will remain as interested parties on the study and are not required to formally respond to this notice.

**DATES:** Written comments on the scope of reasonable alternatives and impacts to be considered in the EIS must be sent to HRT as indicated below. Written comments must be received no later than September 13, 2013.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments should be sent to Ms. Marie Arnt, Public Outreach Coordinator, Hampton Roads Transit, 509 E. 18th Street, Norfolk, VA 23504, by email to [marnt@hrtransit.org](mailto:marnt@hrtransit.org), or through HRT's Web site at [www.gohrt.com/about/development/vbtes](http://www.gohrt.com/about/development/vbtes).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Ryan Long, FTA Community Planner, phone: (215) 656-7051.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*The Proposed Project:* HRT is proposing to extend transit service from the eastern terminus of Norfolk's existing LRT system, "The Tide," at Newtown Road to the Virginia Beach Oceanfront. The service extension will operate as a fixed guideway transit

system within the primary east-west transportation corridor in the City of Virginia Beach, Virginia. A fixed guideway transit system operates on a separate right-of-way that is exclusive for transit or other high-occupancy vehicles. The VBTES will evaluate alternatives for this service extension, including LRT and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). The final alignment, number of stations and their locations, and specific eastern and western termini will be determined through the EIS process.

HRT is intending to seek Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program funding from FTA for one or more of the alternatives that will be examined in the EIS. The CIG program, more commonly known as the New Starts, Small Starts, and Core Capacity program, involves a multi-year, multi-step process that project sponsors must complete before a project is eligible for funding. The steps in the process and the basic requirements of the program can be found on FTA's Web site at [www.fta.dot.gov](http://www.fta.dot.gov).

*Purposes of and Need for the Project:* The purpose of the VBTES is to provide an efficient, integrated, and multimodal system of public transit that:

- Provides an efficient transportation option independent of traffic congestion;
- Supports a dynamic local and regional economy by responding to existing and future travel needs;
- Maintains or enhances livable communities within the project study corridor; and
- Complements planned local growth initiatives and strategies.

The City of Virginia Beach and the region need VBTES to improve personal mobility and to reduce traffic congestion in ways that are safe and reliable and that support future planned growth. Four decades of significant growth in population, employment, and tourism in the City of Virginia Beach has led to increased traffic and congestion on existing roadways serving the study area. Daily and commute trips by motorists and transit users have grown longer resulting in congestion and delays in both morning and evening peak periods in the primary east-west transportation corridor through the City of Virginia Beach. This corridor is defined by I-264, Virginia Beach Boulevard, Laskin Road, and the former NSRR ROW.

The area within the corridor is largely developed. There are limited transit opportunities with the existing bus system which shares these congested roadways. In addition, the Virginia Beach Oceanfront resort area is a primary vacation destination for the

entire Commonwealth of Virginia and the mid-Atlantic region. Non-work trips to access the Virginia Beach Oceanfront area during the period of May through September lead to increased congestion and travel delays for visitors as well as for residents making work and non-work trips. These recreational trips originate from both within and outside the region.

Numerous transportation system planning studies have been completed for the Hampton Roads Region and the City of Virginia Beach that have examined the feasibility of providing additional transit service in the east-west corridor. These studies were conducted with full public participation. Each study identified the need to provide an efficient, safe, economical, and balanced transportation system (with auto, transit, and non-motorized modes of travel) that would minimize the impact to the environment and would complement the community's development patterns. Development of a fixed-guideway transit system through Virginia Beach's east-west corridor is discussed in the following studies:

*HRT/Hampton Roads Regional Planning District Commission Plans:*

- HRTPO Hampton Roads 2034 Long Range Transportation Plan (2012)
- Hampton Roads Regional Transit Vision Plan (2011)
- HRPDC Hampton Roads 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (2006)
- Norfolk to Virginia Beach Light Rail Transit Final EIS (2000)
- Virginia Beach Corridor Major Investment Study (1995)
- The Rail Systems Analysis and Fixed Guideway Service Plan (1991)
- Planning for Restoration of Rail Passenger Service (1988)
- Study of the Cost Effectiveness of Restoring Rail Passenger Service (1986)

*City of Virginia Beach Plans:*

- Hilltop Strategic Growth Area (SGA) Master Plan (2012)
- Lynnhaven SGA Master Plan (2012)
- Rosemont SGA Master Plan (2011)
- Newtown SGA Master Plan (2010)
- Pembroke SGA Implementation Plan (2009)
- Virginia Beach Comprehensive Plan (2009)
- Virginia Beach Oceanfront Resort Area Plan (2005)
- Virginia Beach Central Business District Final Master Plan (1991)

The HRT/Hampton Roads Regional Planning District Commission long-range plans are available for review at the HRT Web site ([www.gohrt.com](http://www.gohrt.com)) and the Hampton Roads Planning District

Commission Web site ([www.hrpdc.org](http://www.hrpdc.org)). The City of Virginia Beach's plans are available on its Web site ([www.vbgov.com](http://www.vbgov.com)).

**Alternatives:** The EIS will consider build and no-build alternatives to determine which would best serve the study area. The EIS will also include descriptions of alternatives considered for evaluation but which were determined not to be reasonable and therefore will not be carried forward for evaluation in detail in the EIS. The build alternatives being carried into the EIS will include LRT and BRT technologies.

In the VBTES, the fixed guideway alignment options for the build alternative(s) are:

- Newtown Road to the Rosemont area;
- Newtown Road to the Oceanfront along the former NSRR ROW; and
- Newtown Road to the Oceanfront partially along Laskin and Birdneck Roads.

The implementation of a fixed guideway alternative would require the location and construction of stations and park-and-ride facilities and may require a vehicle storage and maintenance facility. Stations would be located at intervals that provide service to key activity centers in the study corridor. The EIS will consider reasonable and feasible alternative locations and configurations identified for each of these facilities during the study process.

The EIS will collect and assess information for each alternative in order to evaluate and compare potential benefits and impacts. This will include such information as:

- Station locations;
- Ridership Forecasts;
- Construction and Operation Costs (including utility relocations);
- Impacts to natural resources (including wetlands, protected species, air quality); and
- Impacts to the community and historic resources (including traffic, noise, businesses, residences, community resources).

**No Build Alternative:** The No-Build Alternative serves as the NEPA baseline against which environmental effects of other alternatives, including the proposed project once one is identified, will be measured. The No-Build Alternative will include roadway and transit facility and service improvements (other than the Build Alternatives) planned, programmed and included in the Financially Constrained Regional Transportation Plan to be implemented by the Year 2040. The No Build Alternative will include minor

transit service expansions and/or adjustments that reflect a continuation of existing service policies as identified by HRT.

**Probable Effects/Potential Impacts for Analysis:** HRT anticipates the VBTES will result in a preferred build alternative with beneficial travel and economic development effects but may have some adverse environmental effects. The proposed build alternative would result in travel time savings for existing transit patrons and gain new transit users who switch from automobiles, while offering a broader range of transportation options for Virginia Beach and the region. It will also support economic development and land use goals of the City of Virginia Beach as identified in its Comprehensive Plan and Strategic Growth Area plans. The proposed build alternative would also contribute to goals of reducing growth in vehicle miles traveled and emissions, including greenhouse gases.

The purpose of the EIS is to explore in a public setting the effects of the proposed project and its alternatives on the human and natural environment. FTA and HRT will evaluate the potential social, economic, and environmental impacts of the construction and operation of the proposed project. Impact areas to be addressed include: transportation; land use, zoning, and economic development; secondary development; land acquisition, visual impacts, displacements and relocations; cultural resources, including impacts on historical and archaeological resources and parklands/recreation areas; neighborhood compatibility and environmental justice; natural resource impacts including air quality, wetlands, and water resources; noise and vibration; energy use; safety and security; and wildlife and ecosystems, including endangered species. Reasonable measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts will be identified and evaluated.

Potential impacts are likely to be limited primarily to social and economic impacts associated with development of a fixed guideway transit project. These impacts include enhanced development opportunities and changes in zoning and local plans related to station area development. Such changes will be coordinated with the City of Virginia Beach's comprehensive plan and Strategic Growth Area plans. Property acquisition and displacement may occur because of the development of park-and-ride facilities, alignments utilizing city street rights-of-way, and/or placement of

traction power substations (if needed). Minimal, primarily short-term (e.g., construction), impacts may occur to wetlands and/or surface waters. Construction impacts may disrupt travel and access to businesses and/or residences on a short term basis.

**Role of Agencies and the Public:** NEPA, and FTA's regulations implementing NEPA, calls for public involvement in the EIS process. FTA and HRT will continue to provide a substantial level of public involvement throughout the EIS process, including open house meetings, newsletters, and outreach to city civic leagues and businesses. However, no formal public meetings are planned for the scoping period associated with this NOI due to the extensive previous public meetings hosted by HRT. Specifically related to public and agency involvement, FTA and HRT will (1) extend an invitation to other Federal and non-Federal agencies and Indian tribes that may have an interest in the proposed project to become "participating agencies"; (2) provide an opportunity for involvement by participating agencies and the public in helping to define the purpose and need for a proposed project, as well as the range of alternatives for consideration in the EIS; and (3) establish a plan for coordinating public and agency participation in, and comment on, the environmental review process.

A comprehensive public involvement program has been developed for the VBTES and is posted on the project Web site at [www.gohrt.com](http://www.gohrt.com). The public involvement program includes a full range of involvement activities including the project Web site; outreach to local officials, community and civic groups, and the public; and development and distribution of project newsletters. Specific mechanisms for involvement are detailed in the public involvement program.

The public and participating agencies are invited to consider and comment on this preliminary statement of the purpose and need for the proposed Virginia Beach alternatives. Suggestions for modifications to the statement of purpose and need for the proposed project are welcome and will be given serious consideration. Comments on potential environmental impacts that may be associated with the proposed alternatives are also welcome. There will be additional opportunities to participate in the study process at future public meetings.

FTA and HRT will comply with all applicable Federal environmental laws, regulations, and executive orders during the environmental review process.



These requirements include, but are not limited to, the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality implementing NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500–1508) and FTA's own NEPA regulations (23 CFR part 771); the air quality conformity regulations of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (40 CFR part 93); the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines of EPA (40 CFR part 230); the regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR part 800); the regulations implementing Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (50 CFR part 402); Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act (23 CFR part 774); Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice, 11988 on floodplain management, and 11990 on wetlands; and DOT Order 5610.2(a) on Environmental Justice.

**Paperwork Reduction:** The Paperwork Reduction Act seeks, in part, to minimize the cost to the taxpayer of the creation, collection, maintenance, use, dissemination, and disposition of information. Consistent with this goal and with principles of economy and efficiency in government, it is FTA policy to limit insofar as possible distribution of complete printed sets of NEPA documents. Accordingly, unless a specific request for a complete printed set of the NEPA document is received before the document is printed, FTA and HRT will distribute only electronic copies of the NEPA document. A complete printed set of the environmental document will be available for review at HRT's offices; an electronic copy of the complete environmental document will be available on the HRT's Web site ([www.gohrt.com](http://www.gohrt.com)).

**Brigid Hynes-Cherin,**  
*Regional Administrator.*

[FR Doc. 2013–19623 Filed 8–13–13; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Maritime Administration

[USCG–2003–14294]

#### Gulf Gateway Deepwater Port Decommissioning and License Termination

**AGENCY:** Maritime Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Public Notice; Final Agency Approval of the Gulf Gateway Deepwater Port Decommissioning and License Termination.

**SUMMARY:** The Maritime Administration (MARAD) announces its final clearance

and authorization of the decommissioning of the Gulf Gateway Deepwater Port and termination of the Gulf Gateway Deepwater Port License (License), effective as of June 28, 2013. Pursuant to Section 1503(h) of the Deepwater Port Act of 1974, as amended, a License may remain in effect until such time as it is either suspended or revoked by the Secretary of Transportation or surrendered by the licensee. For purposes of this agency action, MARAD has granted as of June 28, 2013, final clearance of the completed decommissioning of the Gulf Gateway Deepwater Port facility, and approved termination of the official License and all other conditions and obligations set forth by the License.

**DATES:** The date of termination of the License and all actions related to this action is effective as of June 28, 2013.

**ADDRESSES:** The Docket Management Facility maintains the public docket for this project. The docket may be viewed electronically at <http://www.regulations.gov> under docket number USCG–2003–14294, or in person at the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M–30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** If you have questions about the Gulf Gateway Deepwater Port project, contact Ms. Tracey Ford, Acting Office Director, Office of Deepwater Ports and Offshore Activities at (202) 366–0321 or [Tracey.Ford@dot.gov](mailto:Tracey.Ford@dot.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** By letter dated February 21, 2011, Excelerate Energy LP (Excelerate) notified MARAD and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) of its intention to decommission the Gulf Gateway Deepwater Port, located 116 miles off the coast of Louisiana. Excelerate's decision to decommission the Gulf Gateway Deepwater Port was due primarily to declining pipeline capacity issues, significant operational challenges, and changes in the global natural gas market. In accordance with Article 20 of the License, Excelerate is required to decommission its deepwater port in compliance with the decommissioning plans approved by the Maritime Administrator and in accordance with applicable Federal regulations and guidelines in place at the time of decommissioning. The License further requires that MARAD approval be granted in concurrence with other relevant Federal agencies. This requirement was satisfied on April 14, 2012, and Excelerate was granted authorization by MARAD to proceed with its planned decommissioning

activities. Excelerate completed the final decommissioning process on March 14, 2013. At the end of the decommissioning process, all components of the Gulf Gateway facility were removed and the connecting pipelines were decommissioned in-place, in accordance with applicable Federal regulations.

As of the date of this notice, MARAD concurred that all decommissioning activities for the Gulf Gateway Deepwater Port have been completed, and approved termination of the official License and other related License obligations.

This **Federal Register** Notice completes the final close-out and termination procedures for the Gulf Gateway Deepwater Port and License. No further action will be undertaken by MARAD.

Additional information pertaining to the Gulf Gateway Deepwater Port project may be found in the public docket at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) under docket number USCG–2003–14294.

**Authority:** 49 CFR 1.66

By order of the Maritime Administrator  
Dated: August 8, 2013.

**Julie P. Agarwal,**

*Secretary, Maritime Administration.*

[FR Doc. 2013–19687 Filed 8–13–13; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910–81–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Surface Transportation Board

[Docket No. AB 290 (Sub-No. 347X)]

#### Norfolk Southern Railway Company—Abandonment Exemption—in Marengo County, Ala

Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR) has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR part 1152 subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon approximately 0.8 miles of rail line between milepost 241.3 N (east of the line's crossing of the mouth of Devil's Run Slough where the slough joins the Black Warrior River) and milepost 242.1 N (near the intersection of Nash Ave. and E. Franklin St., in Demopolis), in Marengo County, Ala.<sup>1</sup> The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Code 36925.

NSR has certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the line for at least two years; (2) no overhead traffic

<sup>1</sup> NSR states that it is seeking abandonment to permit the removal of the remaining portion of the railroad bridge over the mouth of Devil's Run Slough at the request of the United States Coast Guard (USCG), because USCG views the bridge structure as an impediment to waterway navigation.



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
NAVAL AIR STATION OCEANA  
1750 TOMCAT BOULEVARD  
VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA 23460-2191



IN REPLY REFER TO

5726  
Ser 00/352  
14 Aug 13

Mr. William Harrell  
Chief Executive Officer  
Hampton Roads Transit  
3400 Victoria Boulevard  
Hampton, VA 23661-1509

Dear Mr. Harrell:

Thank you for your letter dated March 25, 2013, in which you outlined the work presently being undertaken by Hampton Roads Transit for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES). I appreciate you and your staff's collaboration and commitment with this study.

In your letter, you listed four discussion points and eight recommendations in which you requested formal "concurrence and action" by the U.S. Navy. That information along with your letter was forwarded to Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic to begin the study and analysis necessary for a Navy response. I fully expect those discussions and recommendations will include representatives from Commander, Navy Installations Command and Headquarters, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, both located in Washington D.C.

I look forward to continuing collaboration as we research options which contribute to the vitality of Hampton Roads.

My point of contact for this matter is Mr. John Lauterbach, NAS Oceana Community Planning Liaison Officer, at 433-2577 or e-mail: [john.lauterbach1@navy.mil](mailto:john.lauterbach1@navy.mil).

Sincerely,

R. N. GEIS  
Captain, U.S. Navy  
Commanding Officer

Copy to:  
CNRMA



RECEIVED

AUG 21 2013



DEPARTMENTS  
( ) EXEC ( ) DEV ( ) FIN  
( ) PLAN ( ) IT ( ) OPS  
( ) MEMO SVCS ( ) OTHER

## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

### DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Street address: 629 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219

Mailing address: P.O. Box 1105, Richmond, Virginia 23218

TDD (804) 698-4021

www.deq.virginia.gov

Douglas W. Domenech  
Secretary of Natural Resources

David K. Paylor  
Director

(804) 698-4000  
1-800-592-5482

August 16, 2013

Ms. Marie Arnt  
Public Outreach Coordinator  
Hampton Roads Transit  
509 East 18<sup>th</sup> Street  
Norfolk, Virginia 23504

RE: Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study

Dear Ms. Arnt:

We have learned that the Federal Transit Administration and Hampton Roads Transit plan to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study. The Federal Transit Administration issued a Notice of Intent to this effect in the Federal Register, Volume 78, Number 157, dated August 14, 2013, pages 49600 through 49603 (hereinafter cited as "Notice" with page number and column).

### DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION

According to the Notice, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) have studied transit alternatives connecting Norfolk and Virginia Beach for a number of years, and have decided to prepare a new EIS to cover additional alternative alignments contemplated since an earlier Final EIS on an 18-mile transit system was prepared in 2000 (Notice, pages 49600, right column and 49601, left column). The new EIS will consider "build alternatives" and a "no-build alternative." The "build alternatives" include the following options for a fixed guideway alignment:

Newtown Road to the Rosemont area;  
Newtown Road to the Oceanfront along the former Norfolk-Southern Railroad right-of-way; and  
Newtown Road to the Oceanfront partially along Laskin and Birdneck Roads.

A fixed-guideway alternative would require location and construction of stations and park-and-ride facilities, and may require a vehicle storage and maintenance facility. Stations would be provided so as to serve key activity centers in the study corridor. (Notice, page 48602, left column.)

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW UNDER NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT**

The roles of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in relation to the review of this project are as follows. First, DEQ's Office of Environmental Impact Review (OEIR) will coordinate Virginia's review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that is to be prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and comment on behalf of the Commonwealth. A similar review process will pertain to the Federal Consistency Certification (FCC) (next heading). If the FCC is provided as part of the environmental document, there can be a single review.

## **FEDERAL CONSISTENCY UNDER THE COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT ACT**

Pursuant to the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended, projects requiring federal license, permits or approvals affecting Virginia's coastal resources or coastal uses must be consistent with the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program (VCP) (see section 307(c)(1) of the Act and the *Federal Consistency Regulations*, 15 CFR Part 930, subpart D). HRT, as the local project sponsor, must provide a federal consistency certification (FCC) which includes an analysis of the proposed activities in light of the enforceable policies of the VCP (first enclosure) and a commitment to comply with the enforceable policies. In addition, we invite your attention to the advisory policies of the VCP (second enclosure). As indicated, the FCC may be provided as part of the NEPA document or independently, depending on your preference and that of the Federal Transit Administration. We recommend, in the interests of an effective review, that the FCC be provided with the NEPA document and that at least 60 days be allowed for review, in keeping with the *Federal Consistency Regulations* (see section 930.94). Section 930.58 of these *Regulations*, and Virginia's *Federal Consistency Information Package* (available at <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/EnvironmentalImpactReview/FederalConsistencyReviews.aspx#cert>) give content requirements for the FCC.

Please note that unlike the EIS requirements of NEPA, the federal consistency requirements of the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program (VCP) pursuant to the federal Coastal Zone Management Act do not contemplate the equivalent of a threshold below which the requirements do not apply.

## **PROJECT SCOPING AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT**

While this Office does not participate in scoping efforts beyond the advice given in this letter, other agencies are free to provide scoping comments concerning the preparation of the Draft EIS. Accordingly, we are sharing our response to the letter with selected state and local Virginia agencies which have responsibilities bearing on the



proposed action. These are likely to include the following (note: starred (\*) agencies administer one or more of the enforceable policies of the VCP):

Department of Environmental Quality:

- Office of Environmental Impact Review
- Tidewater Regional Office\*
- Division of Air Program Coordination\*
- Division of Land Protection and Revitalization (formerly Waste Division)
- Division of Wetlands and Stream Protection\*
- Water Division, Non-point Source Pollution Control\*
- Water Division, Chesapeake Bay Management\*

Department of Conservation and Recreation:

- Division of Natural Heritage
- Division of Planning and Recreation Resources

Department of Health (Office of Drinking Water)

VDH- Division of Shellfish Sanitation\*

Department of Game and Inland Fisheries\*

Virginia Marine Resources Commission\*

Department of Historic Resources

Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Department of Transportation

Hampton Roads Planning District Commission

City of Norfolk

City of Virginia Beach.

In order to ensure an effective coordinated review of the environmental document and FCD, we will require 20 copies of the Draft EIS and FCC when they are published. The submission may include 3 hard copies and 17 CDs or 3 hard copies and an electronic copy available for download at a website, file transfer protocol (ftp) site or the VITAShare file transfer system (<https://vitashare.virginia.gov>). Details on submitting documents to us are available online at <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/EnvironmentalImpactReview/DocumentSubmission.aspx>. The document should include a U.S. Geological Survey topographic map as part of its information.

## **DATABASE AVAILABILITY**

Below is a list of databases that may assist you in the preparation of a NEPA document:

- DEQ Online Database: Virginia Environmental Geographic Information Systems

Information on Permitted Solid Waste Management Facilities, Impaired Waters, Petroleum Releases, Registered Petroleum Facilities, Permitted Discharge (Virginia Pollution Discharge Elimination System Permits) Facilities, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Sites, Water Monitoring Stations, National Wetlands Inventory

- [www.deq.virginia.gov/ConnectWithDEQ/VEGIS.aspx](http://www.deq.virginia.gov/ConnectWithDEQ/VEGIS.aspx)
- DEQ Virginia Coastal Geospatial and Educational Mapping System (GEMS)
 

Virginia's coastal resource data and maps; coastal laws and policies; facts on coastal resource values; and direct links to collaborating agencies responsible for current data

  - <http://128.172.160.131/gems2/>
- DEQ Permit Expert
 

Helps determine if a DEQ permit is necessary

  - [www.deq.virginia.gov/permitexpert/](http://www.deq.virginia.gov/permitexpert/)
- DHR Data Sharing System
 

Survey records in the DHR inventory

  - [www.dhr.virginia.gov/archives/data\\_sharing\\_sys.htm](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/archives/data_sharing_sys.htm)
- DCR Natural Heritage Search
 

Produces lists of resources that occur in specific counties, watersheds or physiographic regions

  - [www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural\\_heritage/dbsearchtool.shtml](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/dbsearchtool.shtml)
- DGIF Fish and Wildlife Information Service
 

Information about Virginia's Wildlife resources

  - <http://vafwis.org/fwis/>
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) Database: Superfund Information Systems
 

Information on hazardous waste sites, potentially hazardous waste sites and remedial activities across the nation, including sites that are on the National Priorities List (NPL) or being considered for the NPL

  - [www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/cursites/index.htm](http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/cursites/index.htm)
- EPA RCRAInfo Search
 

Information on hazardous waste facilities

  - [www.epa.gov/enviro/facts/rcrainfo/search.html](http://www.epa.gov/enviro/facts/rcrainfo/search.html)
- EPA Envirofacts Database



EPA Environmental Information, including EPA-Regulated Facilities and Toxics Release Inventory Reports

- o [www.epa.gov/enviro/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/enviro/index.html)

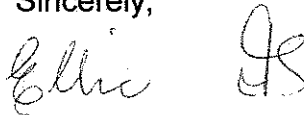
- EPA NEPAssist Database

Facilitates the environmental review process and project planning

<http://nepaassisttool.epa.gov/nepassist/entry.aspx>

If you have questions about the environmental review process or the federal consistency review process, please feel free to call me at (804) 698-4325 or John Fisher at (804) 698-4339.

Sincerely,



Ellie L. Irons, Program Manager  
Environmental Impact Review

cc :

Cindy Keltner, DEQ-TRO  
Kotur S. Narasimhan, DEQ-DAPC  
G. Stephen Coe, DEQ-DLPR  
David L. Davis, DEQ-Water-OWSP  
Larry Gavan, DEQ-Water-NPS  
Daniel Moore, DEQ-Water-CBP  
Roberta Rhur, DCR  
Amy M. Ewing, DGIF  
Keith Tignor, VDACS  
Barry Matthews, VDH  
Roger Kirchen, DHR  
Tony Watkinson, VMRC  
Alfred Ray, VDOT  
Benjamin McFarlane, HRPDC  
Lee Rosenberg, City of Norfolk  
H. Clayton Bernick III, City of Virginia Beach





[Federal Register Volume 78, Number 157 (Wednesday, August 14, 2013)]

[Notices]

[Pages 49600-49603]

From the Federal Register Online via the Government Printing Office [[www.gpo.gov](http://www.gpo.gov)]

[FR Doc No: 2013-19623]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Transit Administration

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for  
the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study, Virginia

AGENCY: Federal Transit Administration (FTA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

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**SUMMARY:** The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) are planning to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES). The VBTES will examine extending transit service from the eastern terminus of Norfolk's existing Light Rail Transit (LRT) system, "The Tide," at Newtown Road to the Virginia Beach Oceanfront either along the former Norfolk Southern Railroad right-of-way (NSRR ROW) that runs from Newtown Road to Birdneck Road or along the NSRR ROW to Laskin Road then onto Birdneck Road. From Birdneck Road, both alignments would extend onto 19th Street terminating at the Virginia Beach Oceanfront.

In 2000, FTA and HRT prepared the Norfolk-Virginia Beach East/West Light Rail Transit System Final EIS. This document looked at an 18-mile transit system connecting downtown Norfolk to the Pavilion area of Virginia Beach. In 2009, FTA and HRT began a Supplemental EIS for the VBTES that intended to evaluate changes in the project corridor since the 2000 EIS. As the Supplemental EIS progressed, FTA and HRT began studying an additional alternative alignment along Laskin Road. This alternative alignment and the additional amount of time that elapsed since work began on the Supplemental EIS led FTA to determine that a Supplemental EIS was no longer appropriate for the VBTES and instead a new EIS should be prepared. Pursuant

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to 23 CFR 771.123(a), FTA and HRT now issue this Notice of Intent (NOI) for an EIS for the VBTES. Although the VBTES has been under consideration in some form since the 1980's, and was included in the 2000 Final EIS, this EIS will specifically rely on relevant information that has been developed over the last several years since the 2009 Supplemental EIS was proposed.

The EIS for the VBTES will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This NOI initiates formal scoping for the EIS, invites interested parties to participate in the process, provides information about the purpose and need for the study, includes the alternatives being considered for evaluation in the EIS, and identifies potential environmental effects to be considered.

HRT began its VBTES public involvement process in 2009. It held





frequent public meetings in 2010, 2012, and 2013, and continues to receive public comments on the study today. HRT plans additional public meetings for September 2013 and November 2013. These continued opportunities for public involvement in the VBTES means no formal public scoping meetings are planned to be held for this EIS.

In 2009 and 2013, HRT, in coordination with FTA, contacted interested party agencies for the VBTES. As such, agencies that have previously responded to invitations to engage in the VBTES process will remain as interested parties on the study and are not required to formally respond to this notice.

**DATES:** Written comments on the scope of reasonable alternatives and impacts to be considered in the EIS must be sent to HRT as indicated below. Written comments must be received no later than September 13, 2013.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments should be sent to Ms. Marie Arnt, Public Outreach Coordinator, Hampton Roads Transit, 509 E. 18th Street, Norfolk, VA 23504, by email to [marnt@hrtransit.org](mailto:marnt@hrtransit.org), or through HRT's Web site at [www.gohrt.com/about/development/vbtes](http://www.gohrt.com/about/development/vbtes).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Ryan Long, FTA Community Planner, phone: (215) 656-7051.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

The Proposed Project: HRT is proposing to extend transit service from the eastern terminus of Norfolk's existing LRT system, "The Tide," at Newtown Road to the Virginia Beach Oceanfront. The service extension will operate as a fixed guideway transit system within the primary east-west transportation corridor in the City of Virginia Beach, Virginia. A fixed guideway transit system operates on a separate right-of-way that is exclusive for transit or other high-occupancy vehicles. The VBTES will evaluate alternatives for this service extension, including LRT and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). The final alignment, number of stations and their locations, and specific eastern and western termini will be determined through the EIS process.

HRT is intending to seek Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program funding from FTA for one or more of the alternatives that will be examined in the EIS. The CIG program, more commonly known as the New Starts, Small Starts, and Core Capacity program, involves a multi-year, multi-step process that project sponsors must complete before a project is eligible for funding. The steps in the process and the basic requirements of the program can be found on FTA's Web site at [www.fta.dot.gov](http://www.fta.dot.gov).

**Purposes of and Need for the Project:** The purpose of the VBTES is to provide an efficient, integrated, and multimodal system of public transit that:

- Provides an efficient transportation option independent of traffic congestion;

- Supports a dynamic local and regional economy by responding to existing and future travel needs;

- Maintains or enhances livable communities within the project study corridor; and

- Complements planned local growth initiatives and strategies.

The City of Virginia Beach and the region need VBTES to improve personal mobility and to reduce traffic congestion in ways that are safe and reliable and that support future planned growth. Four decades of significant growth in population, employment, and tourism in the City of Virginia Beach has led to increased traffic and congestion on





existing roadways serving the study area. Daily and commute trips by motorists and transit users have grown longer resulting in congestion and delays in both morning and evening peak periods in the primary east-west transportation corridor through the City of Virginia Beach. This corridor is defined by I-264, Virginia Beach Boulevard, Laskin Road, and the former NSRR ROW.

The area within the corridor is largely developed. There are limited transit opportunities with the existing bus system which shares these congested roadways. In addition, the Virginia Beach Oceanfront resort area is a primary vacation destination for the entire Commonwealth of Virginia and the mid-Atlantic region. Non-work trips to access the Virginia Beach Oceanfront area during the period of May through September lead to increased congestion and travel delays for visitors as well as for residents making work and non-work trips. These recreational trips originate from both within and outside the region.

Numerous transportation system planning studies have been completed for the Hampton Roads Region and the City of Virginia Beach that have examined the feasibility of providing additional transit service in the east-west corridor. These studies were conducted with full public participation. Each study identified the need to provide an efficient, safe, economical, and balanced transportation system (with auto, transit, and non-motorized modes of travel) that would minimize the impact to the environment and would complement the community's development patterns. Development of a fixed-guideway transit system through Virginia Beach's east-west corridor is discussed in the following studies:

HRT/Hampton Roads Regional Planning District Commission Plans:

HRTPO Hampton Roads 2034 Long Range Transportation Plan (2012)  
 Hampton Roads Regional Transit Vision Plan (2011)  
 HRPDC Hampton Roads 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (2006)  
 Norfolk to Virginia Beach Light Rail Transit Final EIS (2000)  
 Virginia Beach Corridor Major Investment Study (1995)  
 The Rail Systems Analysis and Fixed Guideway Service Plan (1991)  
 Planning for Restoration of Rail Passenger Service (1988)  
 Study of the Cost Effectiveness of Restoring Rail Passenger Service (1986)

City of Virginia Beach Plans:

Hilltop Strategic Growth Area (SGA) Master Plan (2012)  
 Lynnhaven SGA Master Plan (2012)  
 Rosemont SGA Master Plan (2011)  
 Newtown SGA Master Plan (2010)  
 Pembroke SGA Implementation Plan (2009)  
 Virginia Beach Comprehensive Plan (2009)  
 Virginia Beach Oceanfront Resort Area Plan (2005)  
 Virginia Beach Central Business District Final Master Plan (1991)

The HRT/Hampton Roads Regional Planning District Commission long-range plans are available for review at the HRT Web site ([www.gohrt.com](http://www.gohrt.com)) and the Hampton Roads Planning District

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Commission Web site ([www.hrpdc.org](http://www.hrpdc.org)). The City of Virginia Beach's plans are available on its Web site ([www.vbgov.com](http://www.vbgov.com)).

Alternatives: The EIS will consider build and no-build alternatives





to determine which would best serve the study area. The EIS will also include descriptions of alternatives considered for evaluation but which were determined not to be reasonable and therefore will not be carried forward for evaluation in detail in the EIS. The build alternatives being carried into the EIS will include LRT and BRT technologies.

In the VBTES, the fixed guideway alignment options for the build alternative(s) are:

- Newtown Road to the Rosemont area;

- Newtown Road to the Oceanfront along the former NSRR ROW;

and

- Newtown Road to the Oceanfront partially along Laskin and Birdneck Roads.

The implementation of a fixed guideway alternative would require the location and construction of stations and park-and-ride facilities and may require a vehicle storage and maintenance facility. Stations would be located at intervals that provide service to key activity centers in the study corridor. The EIS will consider reasonable and feasible alternative locations and configurations identified for each of these facilities during the study process.

The EIS will collect and assess information for each alternative in order to evaluate and compare potential benefits and impacts. This will include such information as:

- Station locations;

- Ridership Forecasts;

- Construction and Operation Costs (including utility relocations);

- Impacts to natural resources (including wetlands, protected species, air quality); and

- Impacts to the community and historic resources (including traffic, noise, businesses, residences, community resources).

No Build Alternative: The No-Build Alternative serves as the NEPA baseline against which environmental effects of other alternatives, including the proposed project once one is identified, will be measured. The No-Build Alternative will include roadway and transit facility and service improvements (other than the Build Alternatives) planned, programmed and included in the Financially Constrained Regional Transportation Plan to be implemented by the Year 2040. The No Build Alternative will include minor transit service expansions and/or adjustments that reflect a continuation of existing service policies as identified by HRT.

Probable Effects/Potential Impacts for Analysis: HRT anticipates the VBTES will result in a preferred build alternative with beneficial travel and economic development effects but may have some adverse environmental effects. The proposed build alternative would result in travel time savings for existing transit patrons and gain new transit users who switch from automobiles, while offering a broader range of transportation options for Virginia Beach and the region. It will also support economic development and land use goals of the City of Virginia Beach as identified in its Comprehensive Plan and Strategic Growth Area plans. The proposed build alternative would also contribute to goals of reducing growth in vehicle miles traveled and emissions, including greenhouse gases.

The purpose of the EIS is to explore in a public setting the effects of the proposed project and its alternatives on the human and natural environment. FTA and HRT will evaluate the potential social, economic, and environmental impacts of the construction and operation of the proposed project. Impact areas to be addressed include: transportation; land use, zoning, and economic development; secondary development; land acquisition, visual impacts, displacements and





relocations; cultural resources, including impacts on historical and archaeological resources and parklands/recreation areas; neighborhood compatibility and environmental justice; natural resource impacts including air quality, wetlands, and water resources; noise and vibration; energy use; safety and security; and wildlife and ecosystems, including endangered species. Reasonable measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts will be identified and evaluated.

Potential impacts are likely to be limited primarily to social and economic impacts associated with development of a fixed guideway transit project. These impacts include enhanced development opportunities and changes in zoning and local plans related to station area development. Such changes will be coordinated with the City of Virginia Beach's comprehensive plan and Strategic Growth Area plans. Property acquisition and displacement may occur because of the development of park-and-ride facilities, alignments utilizing city street rights-of-way, and/or placement of traction power substations (if needed). Minimal, primarily short-term (e.g., construction), impacts may occur to wetlands and/or surface waters. Construction impacts may disrupt travel and access to businesses and/or residences on a short term basis.

Role of Agencies and the Public: NEPA, and FTA's regulations implementing NEPA, calls for public involvement in the EIS process. FTA and HRT will continue to provide a substantial level of public involvement throughout the EIS process, including open house meetings, newsletters, and outreach to city civic leagues and businesses. However, no formal public meetings are planned for the scoping period associated with this NOI due to the extensive previous public meetings hosted by HRT. Specifically related to public and agency involvement, FTA and HRT will (1) extend an invitation to other Federal and non-Federal agencies and Indian tribes that may have an interest in the proposed project to become "participating agencies"; (2) provide an opportunity for involvement by participating agencies and the public in helping to define the purpose and need for a proposed project, as well as the range of alternatives for consideration in the EIS; and (3) establish a plan for coordinating public and agency participation in, and comment on, the environmental review process.

A comprehensive public involvement program has been developed for the VBTES and is posted on the project Web site at [www.gohrt.com](http://www.gohrt.com). The public involvement program includes a full range of involvement activities including the project Web site; outreach to local officials, community and civic groups, and the public; and development and distribution of project newsletters. Specific mechanisms for involvement are detailed in the public involvement program.

The public and participating agencies are invited to consider and comment on this preliminary statement of the purpose and need for the proposed Virginia Beach alternatives. Suggestions for modifications to the statement of purpose and need for the proposed project are welcome and will be given serious consideration. Comments on potential environmental impacts that may be associated with the proposed alternatives are also welcome. There will be additional opportunities to participate in the study process at future public meetings.

FTA and HRT will comply with all applicable Federal environmental laws, regulations, and executive orders during the environmental review process.

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These requirements include, but are not limited to, the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality implementing NEPA (40 CFR parts



1500-1508) and FTA's own NEPA regulations (23 CFR part 771); the air quality conformity regulations of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (40 CFR part 93); the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines of EPA (40 CFR part 230); the regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR part 800); the regulations implementing Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (50 CFR part 402); Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act (23 CFR part 774); Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice, 11988 on floodplain management, and 11990 on wetlands; and DOT Order 5610.2(a) on Environmental Justice.

Paperwork Reduction: The Paperwork Reduction Act seeks, in part, to minimize the cost to the taxpayer of the creation, collection, maintenance, use, dissemination, and disposition of information. Consistent with this goal and with principles of economy and efficiency in government, it is FTA policy to limit insofar as possible distribution of complete printed sets of NEPA documents. Accordingly, unless a specific request for a complete printed set of the NEPA document is received before the document is printed, FTA and HRT will distribute only electronic copies of the NEPA document. A complete printed set of the environmental document will be available for review at HRT's offices; an electronic copy of the complete environmental document will be available on the HRT's Web site ([www.gohrt.com](http://www.gohrt.com)).

Brigid Hynes-Cherin,  
Regional Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2013-19623 Filed 8-13-13; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE P





Douglas W. Domenech  
Secretary of Natural Resources



David A. Johnson  
Director

**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION**

600 East Main Street, 24<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Richmond, Virginia 23219  
(804) 786-6124

August 26, 2013

Stephanie Dyer-Carroll, AICP  
Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.  
72 Cedar Street  
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study DEIS, revised

Dear Ms. Dyer-Carroll:

The Department of Conservation and Recreation's Division of Natural Heritage (DCR) has searched its Biotics Data System for occurrences of natural heritage resources from the area outlined on the submitted map. Natural heritage resources are defined as the habitat of rare, threatened, or endangered plant and animal species, unique or exemplary natural communities, and significant geologic formations.

**Kempsville and Virginia Beach Quads**

Biotics documents the presence of natural heritage resources in the project area. However, due to the scope of the activity and the distance to the resources, we do not anticipate that this project will adversely impact these natural heritage resources.

**Princess Anne Quad**

According to the information currently in our files, the Little metalmark (*Calephelis virginienensis*, G4/S1/NL/NL) has been historically documented adjacent to the Vehicle Storage & Maintenance Facility.

The Little Metalmark is a small butterfly of the southeastern United States, from Virginia to Florida and west to Texas (Cech and Tudor, 2005)). In Virginia, it is documented only in three southeastern counties (VDCR-DNH and VDGIF, 2013).

It is a very small butterfly, which almost resembles a moth by resting with its wings open pressed against the underside of leaves thus revealing its orange, black, and metallic markings. The Little Metalmark prefers open areas with its host plants, usually pine flatwoods, savannas and roadsides. Yellow Thistle (*Cirsium horridulum*) was considered the sole host plant, but others have more recently been cited (VDCR-DNH and VDGIF, 2013).

Where found, the Little Metalmark can be quite common although it may be much less common at the

periphery of its range. The loss of habitat through succession or development is likely the main threat to this species (VDCR-DNH and VDGIF, 2013).

Due to the potential for this site to support populations of the Little Metalmark, DCR recommends an inventory for the resource in the Vehicle Storage and Maintenance Facility area. With the survey results we can more accurately evaluate potential impacts to natural heritage resources and offer specific protection recommendations for minimizing impacts to the documented resources.

DCR-Division of Natural Heritage biologists are qualified and available to conduct inventories for rare, threatened, and endangered species. Please contact J. Christopher Ludwig, Natural Heritage Inventory Manager, at [chris.ludwig@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:chris.ludwig@dcr.virginia.gov) or 804-371-6206 to discuss arrangements for field work.

DCR-Division of Natural Heritage biologists are qualified and available to conduct inventories for rare, threatened, and endangered species. Please contact J. Christopher Ludwig, Natural Heritage Inventory Manager, at [chris.ludwig@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:chris.ludwig@dcr.virginia.gov) or 804-371-6206 to discuss arrangements for field work. A list of other individuals who are qualified to conduct inventories may be obtained from the USFWS.

Under a Memorandum of Agreement established between the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) and the DCR, DCR represents VDACS in comments regarding potential impacts on state-listed threatened and endangered plant and insect species. The current activity will not affect any documented state-listed plants or insects.

There are no State Natural Area Preserves under DCR's jurisdiction in the project vicinity.

New and updated information is continually added to Biotics. Please contact DCR for an update on this natural heritage information if a significant amount of time passes before it is utilized.

A fee of \$305.00 has been assessed for the service of providing this information. Please find enclosed an invoice for that amount. Please return one copy of the invoice along with your remittance made payable to the Treasurer of Virginia, **DCR - Division of Natural Heritage, 600 East Main Street, 24<sup>th</sup> Floor, Richmond, VA 23219**. Payment is due within thirty days of the invoice date. Please note the change of address for remittance of payment as of July 1, 2013. Late payment may result in the suspension of project review service for future projects.

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) maintains a database of wildlife locations, including threatened and endangered species, trout streams, and anadromous fish waters that may contain information not documented in this letter. Their database may be accessed from <http://vafwis.org/fwis/> or contact Gladys Cason (804-367-0909 or [Gladys.Cason@dgif.virginia.gov](mailto:Gladys.Cason@dgif.virginia.gov)).

Should you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at (804) 692-0984. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,



Alli Baird, LA, ASLA  
Coastal Zone Locality Liaison



#### Literature Cited

R. Cech and G. Tudor. 2005. Butterflies of the East Coast. Pg. 248. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 248 pp.

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation - Division of Natural Heritage and Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. 2013. Atlas of Rare Butterflies, Skippers, Moths, Dragonflies, and Damselflies of Virginia. Accessed at [www.vararespecies.org](http://www.vararespecies.org) on [19Aug2013]

**Accounts Payable****COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**

Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Division of Natural Heritage  
600 East Main Street, 24<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Richmond, VA 23219

Make checks payable to the  
**TREASURER OF VIRGINIA**

**NOTICE new address to left**

**PLEASE include "Division of Natural Heritage" in the address when mailing payment.**

Fed I.D. # 54-6004497  
DUNS # 8097 44444

Payment is due 30 days after receipt  
or invoice

**INVOICE**

Stephanie Dyer-Carroll, AICP  
Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.  
72 Cedar Street  
Hartford, CT 06106

Invoice Number: **H- 10400**

Invoice Date: **August 20, 2013**

Taxpayer I.D.# 06-1206345

Please return remittance copy with payment  
to ensure proper credit to your invoice.

Contact: Rene' Hypes

(804) 371-2671      Division of Natural Heritage  
FAX# (804) 371-2674      TDD (804) 786-2121

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL AMOUNT
<b>Impact Review</b>	3 Quads	EA	90.00	270.00
Element Occurrences	1-5	AT	35.00	35.00
<b>Site Reference</b>				
Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study				
DEIS				

**Credit Information:**

**199 0200 14 50317 02199 73201 304**

Amount Due: **\$305.00**

The Department of Conservation and Recreation may charge interest on all past due accounts receivable in accordance with guidelines promulgated by the Department of accounts and at the underpayment rate prescribed in Section 58.1-15 of the Code of Virginia. Each past due account receivable may also be charge an additional mount which shall approximate the administrative cost incurred in collecting the past due amount. The Department may also assess late payment penalty fees as appropriate.



## TELECON

Call From: Terry Knowles, USCG      Project: VBTES  
Call To: Stephanie Dyer-Carroll,  
FHI      Voice/Fax: 757.398.6587  
Date: 9/10/13      Time:  
Subject: Status of VBTES Project

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Terry Knowles with the USCG called to follow up on our consultation letter dated May 7, 2013. He inquired about whether HRT had finished the design for the Upper Linkhorn Bay crossing. Ms. Dyer-Carroll indicated that the project was still considering various alternative alignments. Mr. Knowles stated that the USCG will want to put out a public notice regarding the potential changes at each of the four crossings. In order to prepare the notice, the USCG will need the existing and proposed vertical and horizontal clearance under each bridge, specifically the distance between the Mean High Water Line and the underside of the bridges, as well as the width of each opening. They will also require a location map and 8-1/2" x 11" plans of the new or improved bridges and any information on the existing use of the waterways. This information should be submitted in letter form to Mr. Knowles. If the notice does not generate any public comments, then a USCG permit may not be required.





# HAMPTON ROADS TRANSIT

November 6, 2013

Kathleen Kilpatrick  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
2801 Kensington Avenue  
Richmond, VA 23221

Re: Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study DEIS, Virginia Beach, VA, DHR File No. 2009-1705

Dear Ms. Kilpatrick,

Hampton Roads Transit (HRT), in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), is studying the possible extension of fixed-guideway transit service in the City of Virginia Beach. The project under study is a proposed fixed guideway transit extension from the Tide Light Rail Station at Newtown Road in Norfolk, Virginia eastward to the Virginia Beach Oceanfront. The proposed extension would run along the inactive NRHP-eligible Norfolk Southern Rail Line (135-5154) purchased by the City of Virginia Beach in 2012. In addition to the alternatives using the former railroad property, other corridors are also under consideration to meet the project's goals and objectives. Both light rail and bus rapid transit fixed-guideway technology options for the extension are under consideration. HRT and FTA are studying the environmental impacts of the various alignments and technologies through the NEPA process and are preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). After public review of the DEIS, it is anticipated that the City of Virginia Beach will select a Locally Preferred Alternative to be documented in a Final EIS and Record of Decision (FEIS/ROD).

The proposed project alternatives pass near several historic resources that are listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). A reconnaissance-level screening report was prepared in January 2011 by Gray and Pape, Inc. prior to a temporary halt in the study's process between April 2011 and November 2012. This report was not submitted to the Department of Historic Resources (DHR) for review; however, a copy of this report was provided to your office in April 2013 for informational purposes. The project has been subject to recent discussions with your office, including an onsite visit and tour of the various alternatives on September 6, 2013. The current Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the project was identified by HRT and FTA in consultation with your office.

For the completion of the DEIS being prepared for this project, HRT and FTA propose to revise and update the reconnaissance-level (Phase 1A) survey of the alternatives for DHR review. The archaeological reconnaissance survey will provide a general overview of previously recorded sites within the APE and will involve a visual surface inspection of areas not previously surveyed to assess existing conditions of the APE that may sustain subsurface impacts. Architectural investigations will provide an overview of the previously recorded architectural resources within the APE of the various alternatives for aboveground resources. A windshield survey would be completed to supplement the work by Gray and Pape, Inc., and a summary of the types and historical development of resources in the corridor would be prepared. This will provide an overview of the types of historic properties that may be affected by the various alternatives and an assessment of the relative project-related effects for a comparison of the alternatives. All work will follow DHR's *Guidelines for Conducting Historic Resources Survey in Virginia* (2011) and will be completed by consultants that meet or exceed the Secretary of the Interior's *Professional Qualification Standards*.

The complete identification and evaluation of historic properties, as well as a determination of effect, will be completed based on the results of the Phase 1 Survey and DEIS analysis and as agreed to by FTA and SHPO specific to any Locally Preferred Alternative selected for further analysis in the FEIS/ROD. Section 106 compliance will be completed prior to the issuance of the FEIS/ROD.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with this project. Please contact me directly at (757) 222-6000 extension 6699, or [jtimmm@hrtransit.org](mailto:jtimmm@hrtransit.org) with any questions. We appreciate the assistance of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in moving the DEIS forward for the above referenced project.

Sincerely,



Julie Timm, AICP, CEP

Transit Development Officer, Hampton Roads Transit

Cc: Andrea Kampinen, Architectural Historian, DHR Office of Review and Compliance  
Dan Koenig, Community Planner, FTA, Metro DC Office  
Ryan Long, Community Planner, FTA, Region 3  
William Harrell, President and Chief Executive Officer, Hampton Roads Transit  
Ray Amoruso, Chief Planning and Development Officer, Hampton Roads Transit

Document Control Number: EX450-GS-19 10039



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Douglas W. Domenech  
Secretary of Natural Resources

**Department of Historic Resources**  
2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221

Kathleen S. Kilpatrick  
Director

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TDD: (804) 367-2386  
[www.dhr.virginia.gov](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov)

November 26, 2013

Julie Timm, Transit Development Officer  
Hampton Roads Transit  
3400 Victoria Boulevard  
Hampton, VA 23661

Re: Virginia Beach Transit Extension – Survey Methodology  
City of Virginia Beach, Virginia  
DHR File No. 2009-1705

Dear Ms. Timm,

Thank you for your letter regarding your proposed Cultural Resource Survey Methodology, which we received on November 8, 2013. We understand that Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) would like to begin the identification of historic properties within the Area of Potential Effects for the above-referenced project; however the proposed methodology has changed slightly from what was discussed in the field on September 6, 2013. For both archaeology and architecture, HRT will still prepare a historic context and general overview of resources and potential effects within the APE, building upon the background information prepared by Gray and Pape, Inc. in January 2011, but instead of a full architectural reconnaissance survey of all three alternatives, HRT proposes to only fully survey and assess effects on the preferred alternative. We concur with this survey approach; however please notify our office of any changes to the methodology.

Should you have any additional questions, please contact me at (804) 482-6084, or via email at [andrea.kampinen@dhr.virginia.gov](mailto:andrea.kampinen@dhr.virginia.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andrea Kampinen".

Andrea Kampinen, Architectural Historian  
Office of Review and Compliance

Cc:

Dan Koenig, FTA  
Marc Shea, City of Virginia Beach  
Jeanne Barnes, HDR, Inc.

Administrative Services  
10 Courthouse Ave.  
Petersburg, VA 23803  
Tel: (804) 862-6416  
Fax: (804) 862-6196

Capital Region Office  
2801 Kensington Ave.  
Richmond, VA 23221  
Tel: (804) 367-2323  
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Tidewater Region Office  
14415 Old Courthouse Way  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Newport News, VA 23608  
Tel: (757) 886-2807  
Fax: (757) 886-2808

Western Region Office  
962 Kime Lane  
Salem, VA 24153  
Tel: (540) 387-5443  
Fax: (540) 387-5446

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Stephens City, VA 22655  
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